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MY PERSONAL FAITH

Books by Sholem Asch

THE MOTHER

THREE NOVELS

SONG OF THE VALLEY

THE NAZARENE

WHAT I BELIEVE

MY PERSONAL FAITH

By

SHOLEM ASCH

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In these days, when the punishment of God has come not only upon individuals, but upon entire peoples, when countries are transformed overnight from lands of freedom into camps of slavery, when an entire continent is in process of obliteration, when civilized peoples are reduced to the status of primitive tribes under the rule of a master-race; in these days when God himself is trampled under foot and prophetic faith utterly humiliated, has not the time come for such a reckoning and review, not only for the individual, but for all of us? Has not the time come for a searching of the heart, a close examination of our acts and failures, in order that we may learn from them the great lesson which they carry?

As one of many who feel upon their shoulders the crushing burden of the time, as one who suffers in the common torment, I have taken it upon myself to awaken certain ancient memories, to point to ancient moral values which are charged with the power of salvation for us and for our days.

The will to see the world emerge strengthened and purified from the calamity under which it lies prostrate, the longing to help transform the punishment of God into his blessing, constitute my right and supply me with the courage to set down in writing my innermost convictions and to offer them to the public in this book.

SHOLEM ASCH

January 20, 1941

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Chapter One

IN THE BEGINNING

Daylight had died in the primal forest. A confused howling and wailing went up from the dense tangle of trunks and branches. A ghastly chorus of pain and fear ran through the underbrush, the utterance of the weak and oppressed in flight for shelter, overborne by the roaring of the strong which, armed with horns and claws, plunged powerfully through the darkness. The smaller creatures heard with indescribable dread the cry and footsteps of the larger. Only primitive man, ape-like in form, did something more than lament. He too was subject to that nameless horror which, with the setting of the sun, gripped every weaker creature in the forest by the throat; he alone, however, had not lost all self-control. Deliberately he withdrew to a distance from the other primates which sought to dull the anguish of their terror in play with their mates. He left mate and offspring cowering behind the curtain of foliage and with his long, muscular arms swung himself to the summit of a tree. He was driven by curiosity; he wanted to know what was going on within the high, over-arching cupola. Careless of the danger that he might be perceived by the prey-seekers lurking about the trees, he lifted himself erect, his head directed to the heavens. He

saw a fire-ball sinking on the rim of the cupola below the horizon, leaving behind a streak of blood. Then primitive man stretched out his arms and, grinding his teeth with rage, sought to hold back the fire-ball.

But the course of the flaming sphere was not to be arrested. Thereupon primitive man, defiant and daring, set himself to the task of spying out its ways. With every onset of darkness he clambered to the treetop and watched the source of light disappear. In time he learned to do this not only with the coming of night, and not only to follow the course of the sun. Every natural phenomenon stirred his curiosity. Whenever a change in the order of things filled the inhabitants of the primal forest—sometimes even the mightiest among them—with helpless terror, he alone, this pitiful, narrow-skulled ape, weakest among the primates, devoid of natural weapons, dared to look danger in the face in order that he might observe and understand the phenomenon! He did not even close his eyes against the lightning, and the thunder did not drive him from his search. It was as though he had to know everything, as though none of these evil things could come to pass without him!

The persistent audacity with which man, at the beginning of his development, pursued the ways of nature, runs like a thread through the term of his existence, from his emergence into the human until the present day. We may comfort ourselves with this thought: what man has achieved until today is—a memorandum of the phenomena of nature; it is as though the whole of nature had been given him as his inheritance, and he is

ceaselessly occupied with making an inventory of his possessions.

For there is one admission upon which all agree: it is still too early to draw up the balance sheet of our knowledge, to pour as it were into a single mold all creation and the entire order of the world (which was the ambition of the monists); and perhaps the time of such a consummation will never come. Both the world and our knowledge of the world are in eternal flux, in ever-emergent growth. It may perhaps best be called an eternal making and breaking of molds. Our experiences resemble the waves of the sea; every wave is followed by another. The closer we approach the answer to the riddle of life the thicker is the mist which gathers about it, rising out of the abyss of the future. This is our tragedy—and also our salvation. We are leaves on an eternal tree. So far there is only one task before us: to take over the inventory handed down to us by our forbears, to increase it, and to hand the sum on to our posterity.

Are we then nothing but observers, or are we also participants? Are we audience or actors, spies and eavesdroppers or partners in the act of creation?

Before we can answer this question we must take up another problem which touches us closer and which is of greater significance:

Have we broken our bonds or are we, with all the progress of our knowledge, still held fast in chains? Is man, like every other creature, completely geared to the processes of nature; is he harnessed to her ways in all his perceptions and emotions? What he has achieved

so far seems to be only the functional result of the specifically mechanistic organs with which nature has endowed him—not for his own ends, not for the free play of his energies, but for other, predetermined ends. The highest possibilities open to man are already fixed, are embryonically present, in the dynamic of his form. Out of the convolutions of his brain evolves only that which nature kneaded into it at the beginning, so that he might move toward his appointed end. Even his increasing revolt against nature, which he expresses by turning upon her and improving her, is, it seems, only a function which nature has entrusted to him.

Yet it is not so; man is the only living thing which, like fabled Prometheus, is fastened with an iron chain to the rock of natural law, and yet has managed to burst the chain. For he dares to lift up his head and, with the help of the instincts which he himself has developed and refined, to attain to knowledge. And thereby it is given to him to break the vicious circle in which all other creatures are confined by the curse of their animal being.

We shall not undertake to sustain this answer with purely scientific argumentation; but we do assume for ourselves, as laymen, the right to give the answer in a form which accords with our insights:

Among all the instruments which we possess for perceiving the outer world there is not a single faculty which is absolutely neutral; that is to say, there is not a single point on which, as on an island, we may base our observations of nature. Whatever our senses are able to perceive must first have passed through the mold of

nature, must, as it were, have sprung from her field. Wherever it is otherwise, the material is turned back at the threshold of our perception. In spite of everything we have learned, we still do not possess the tiniest island to which we can resort, so as to observe mother nature from its shores. Like the rest of creation we hang, like helpless children, to the hem of her skirt. On the other hand, we are perpetually pursued and corroded by the eternal question: "But what is there on the other side of the wall?"

Thus it already was—perhaps even in larger measure—in the time of the beginning of man, and there are grounds to justify the assumption that it was precisely this restlessness which was the driving force of his spiritual development, and that it preceded, yes, and still precedes, his physical development. Even in his far-off beginnings man was not content with the mere taking of an "inventory," i.e., with the acquisition of knowledge, with the cognition of things; he sought to lift the curtain and to investigate what lay behind. Had this not been the case man would have been content, like every other living thing, to accept as they were the natural phenomena which confronted him and would not have sought to improve upon them. Whenever his physical perception was inadequate to penetrate the darkness which surrounds every natural phenomenon, he brought to bear upon it spiritual perception, his instinct to grasp the incomprehensible. The very fact that it lay within man's perception to raise the daring question—so offensive to the majesty of nature—as to what lay on the

other side of the wall, this fact alone justifies us in the assumption that the tragic, pitiful first scratching at the dividing wall represents the first attempt to create for ourselves that conceivable point of observation which lies beyond the bounds of nature.

Experience and perception come to us through the medium of our senses. We have not been given a single proof that a thing really exists, as such, in nature. For only when it activates our senses does it become a "thing." Whatever seeks to be received into the circle of our perception must first undergo a certain contraction and limitation, so that it may adapt itself to our limited instruments of perception; it must take on another form, which our antennae can lay hold on. And something more: the "thing" must abide in patience until one of our senses breathes life into it. We give to things a form which corresponds to the measure of form which we carry within us. We bestow motion upon it out of our own dynamic. We apprehend the gross material of things through our own gross sense functions, taste, motion, energy; the more refined material of things is evoked by the play of our thinnest and most delicate strings, the weave of our nerves and our spinal cord, the response of our instincts. The most refined of all, not accessible to the senses, we apprehend through our intuition. It is reasonable to assume that the range of our senses has not yet reached its limits, and is still in process of constant development. Vast, undiscovered areas of the world of being still lie latent in the hidden weave of our nervous system. And we apprehend with

the help of sensitivities still unsuspected by us the darkest shadows fleeting through the night of the undiscovered world.

As long as we have no neutral point outside the limits of the universe, upon which to stand and apply the absolute yardstick, in such a manner that the yardstick shall suffer neither diminution nor extension according to the law of relativity, just so long must we measure the universe with our inner yardstick, and weigh it with our inner balance. We must as it were clip the wings of the universe to some extent, so that it may adapt itself to the realm of our power of perception. And this becomes possible only when we make the attempt to grasp the universe with the little calipers of our perceptive faculties.

TIME

Eddington, the English astronomer, tells us that when he shuts his eyes and directs his thoughts inwards, he perceives himself in duration, but not in extension. That is to say, we hear and apprehend time, but we do not hear and apprehend space. If there is anything to which the name eternal can be applied, it is beyond all doubt time. We can also conceive of it as belonging to the realm of the supra-sensual, for it is the most immaterial thing there is or has ever been. But before and behind us extends the long scroll upon which we and our entire universe are but a tiny inscribed point. Name it, then, whatever you like—except time; for it exists. There is, indeed, no time without us. Time is order. It is true that

actly the same way no concept exists outside of us—for concept is a function of meaning, or sense, completely dependent upon us.

To extend the power of his pitifully inadequate cornea man has invented lenses, which capture tremendous reaches of the universe and bring within the range of perception gigantic worlds removed from him by incredible distances. By the power of spectroanalysis he forces the mystery of the universe to unveil itself, so that he may peep into the cosmic witch's caldron. He feels and sniffs and roots about, weighs and measures, as though he were dealing with a clod of earth, not with the stars or with star-dust. With a contemptuous gesture he forces them into his ninety-two earthly compartments and deprives them of all their cosmic mystery. In similar fashion man has constructed invisible lenses with which he equips all his other senses—and above all his finest and most sensitive: his instincts and his intuitions.

But the invisible lenses with which he has augmented and sharpened his intuition are in fact a thousand times stronger and more sensitive—they catch the all but imperceptible movements of the unknown spiritual worlds which surround us. And he does with these what he has done with the most enormous celestial bodies—he fastens them to the navel of the earth. His instincts are like cupping jars which cling to the undiscovered and the invisible, which man has not yet been able to seize with the calipers of his sense. Thus they work in him unknown, subterraneously as it were, and are transmitted to him by reverberations; they set in motion the finest

strings of his brain box and give such wings to his capacity for wonder as surpass his own forces and natural gifts. Who, then, can set limits to that which "sees and remains unseen," to the spirit of man? Who can command this driving force, which slips through all barriers and broods above all worlds?

Space and time are dimensions into which man has forced all being that exists for him. But what is he to do about that which is left over, that which can find no place in the area of his perception? Whatever he cannot get in under the heading of "space" and "time" man, order-loving, ties into a neat bundle to which he attaches a colorless label: "something."

In various times this "something" has had various names. No age has succeeded in eliminating it entirely. Even the monists, who sought to fuse the whole world order with the long chain of evolution, battered their fists raw against the wall of this "something." We may name it whatever we like, "Potentiality," or "Substance," "Logos," "Will," or even "Vitalin"; but if it must be taken into the reckoning—since we are not able to get round it—we might as well stick to "God." And since there is no way out of it, since we are being constantly brought up by this "something," we must credit to it whatever cannot be brought into the area of our perception. We must, in fact, ascribe to the first cause all the attributes of a first cause, assuming that the "something" (which is indeed the first cause) already contained the vital seed which was to bring forth the material world, and contained likewise the dynamic for its

realization in form. In other words: within the first cause life lies locked in all its forms.

The creation which rests upon order is a radiation of its own being. It is life, it is form, and it cannot be other than it is. But if this is so, it will be objected, then it is that which we call "nature." But such is not the case, for "nature" is confined to strictest law and order. It can take into itself only that which fits into the framework of its laws, to wit, that which is "natural" (and it is thus that we see it by means of our concepts). The "something," per contra, embraces everything that lies beyond the realm of our concepts. It is, then, limitless, and stands outside the dimensions of time and space. We must therefore take it that nature is the agent of the "something" in the temporal and spatial world, its representative, as it were. And it is only by the introduction of the "something" that we shall find an answer to what lies on the other side of the wall.

Nor can we concede that nature fulfills both functions, that of the incomprehensible not less than that of the comprehensible. For if we did that we should have to split the essence of nature, lifting out a part of nature's tendency to order and ascribing to it supernatural forces. We should reach the same result in the end; we should come once more to the "something" whose other half is in some measure bound up with the narrowly limited laws of nature. It is therefore more intelligible for our concepts to look upon the "something" as independent being, and upon nature as its agent, to which is assigned solely the administration or management within bodies which are limited, form-bound, and directed by order.

The clearest proof that the “something” is not merely the obverse side of nature lies, for me, in the fact that nature’s own creature, man, is able by virtue of his imagination to lift the “thing” out of its species and to place upon it the stamp of personality and of individual destiny. Thus, for instance, the artist gives apple-character to the apple, he imparts to it, out of the wealth of his own spirit, more charm than nature herself gave it; the musician brings order into a confusion of tones. Of this nature herself is incapable. All she can do is impart to a thing the typical mask of its species, while man imparts to things the gifts which are his own. And in order to prove this we do not even need to bring the artist into the argument—for we observe the fact in every moment of our lives. I am profoundly convinced that as often as we move from the present moment into the next it is a divine and not a natural power which has helped us across the threshold. We are able to do it only by the grace of the invisible bridges which span the distance between the thing and the inconceivable, between the present “being” and the future “becoming.”

To the element of the dynamic in form man has added a driving power acquired from himself. In his passage on the invisible bridges across the abyss between the immediate and the becoming, he has been guided by a divine hand. Were it otherwise, it would be incomprehensible that man should not have remained, like the animals, a creature locked within himself. In the process of the evolution of man a new element came into play: faith. For to take a certain step into the future without faith is impossible.

This instinct of faith is, for me, the one advantage which lifts man above the animals. It is the factor responsible for everything that man as such has achieved. And to the demonstration of the existence of this instinct of faith, as much for my benefit as for anyone else's, this work is dedicated.

Chapter Two

PERSONALITY

Since we have taken the view that a first cause must be granted all the attributes of a first cause, we must conclude logically that every cell, being a consequence of divine creation, carries within itself, in seed, the entire creation. Or we may put it thus: if, for whatever reason it might be, all matter in the universe were destroyed, with the exception of a single cell, then out of this cell would unfold the whole of the material world, and, granted similar conditions, this material world would, in accordance with the principle of causality, assume the same natural laws, and therefore the same forms, as dominate matter today.

We are of the opinion that the law of causality is not the determinant factor in the laws; the real factor in creation, that is, in the process of creation itself, the dynamic of form, is much rather inherent in matter as such. It is the power of the first creation which is imbedded in it. What the principle of causality does is merely to create the proper setting within which the process unfolds in this or that form. The law of causality plays the same role in the process of the forming of created things as the catalytic agent in the chemical process; it participates mediately, and not immediately; it

provides the setting and the circumstance within which the created thing takes on its special form. To return, then, to our point: everything could be re-created in accordance with the law of causality, with a single exception, and that is the human personality, in other words the divine in man. For the human personality is not merely cause, that is to say it is not implicit in being, in the seed of creation, but is the product of purely human inspirational radiation.

We shall now seek to explain the foregoing with the help of some definitions:

According to what was previously stated, "being" must be divided into two parts, a higher being and a lower being.

HIGHER AND LOWER BEING

The higher being is that being which has been called forth by the first cause. It is not substantive but ideal and exists beyond being, that is to say, not in reality, but in possibility.

But in no wise less than the higher being is the being of reality, the breath or emanation of God. For it is creation. Everything that God creates is endowed with all the characteristics of creation: it possesses the dynamic of the primal force which called it into being. It is life, and life creates. The creative works in forms, for form and creation are an indivisible whole. The "thing" fills the form which it has brought forth from within itself, in the dynamic of creation in contained order, an actuality of law.

We may assume that creation itself and its laws followed a single and common development. There were no pre-existent and fixed forms into which creation poured itself; the laws themselves were as mobile as the whole process of creation and developed together with the forms. Accordingly, then, they are not to be considered as having achieved their finality. That, however, in passing. In any case "being," as it now confronts us, is firmly linked to the apparatus of definite law. Nature, the principle of all creation, is a self-enclosed realm of being, its rule confined to its own borders. The extraordinary range of method which nature invokes is directed solely to the fulfillment of her task. Like her creatures, nature is a mechanism which, working on life, keeps to straight rails. She has no will, she is blind, like every mechanism without personal individuality. She creates life, i.e., herself, according to the principle of being and becoming.

POSSIBILITY

Possibility is that which does not lie within the driving power of becoming, but in a special and self-acquired power with the help of which the individual may direct "becoming" according to his own will, either to accelerate or to slow up the process, either within the framework of natural law or outside of it (this being merely a question of method) and either with or without success (this being a question of intensity). The will itself, however, is already a part of possibility.

Possibility and will are one.

Possibility is unbounded; it stands outside the limits of mechanical becoming.

Possibility is free will and as such a radiation of "higher being."

INSPIRATION OF THE SPECIES OR DIVINE INSPIRATION?

The first condition of being is the will to be. No power of dynamic form would have been capable of bringing forth the process of "being and becoming" if the unconscious will to be had not lain imbedded in the seed of things. The will to "attain" finds expression in an internal exertion, in a striving native to things themselves which gives them the capacity to withstand all attempts upon them, to circumvent all obstacles, and to "attain."

We observe the will to be in a thousand phenomena of daily life. Amazed we watch the leaf break forth from the bud, battling obstinately with its sister leaves which obstruct its path, and forcing its way through from the shaded to the sunlit side. And we ask: "Why does it do that? Why does it want to become?" The explanation given us in the Talmud is that over every blade of grass an angel stands and spurs it on to growth. I believe that this angel does not stand over the blade of grass but sits within it: it is the will to become which is revealed by everything that has come into being. To this I would give the name "the inspiration of the species."

The species operates a sort of racing track for its individual members and chooses those who arrive first at

the winning post. And every individual who reaches the post is flushed with exertion and bathed in the sweat of the thousand dangers through which it has passed. In the course of the race the seed cells shoot through the channel of fructification, and every cell strives to be the first to reach the female egg which lies in wait. Every cell has its own urge to life and the race goes to the one which gets the utmost out of its inspiration, so that it may fulfill its task—which is the idea of the breed and the species—and thereby acquire more strength for its own impulse.

The will of the thing is confined completely to its goal, to the attainment of the thing-objective. For it draws its inspiration from the species, which alone has the task of becoming. That is why the will of the individual lies in the form, and is bound to form.

Apart from this inspiration of the species, driving forward the thing-in-the-becoming, there is another inspiration, deriving from an area outside the thing-in-the-becoming, that is to say outside the area of the dynamic of form; and it is connected with the “something” which is on a higher level than the species. This is the inspiration which, to choose one example, led man to the concept of the Godhead. Man as species is just as able as any other creature to go on existing without racking his brains as to what there is on the “other side.” This inspiration, which has not been planted in him by the demand either for self-preservation or for the strengthening of the species, but which goes beyond the need of empiric being and creates the cognition of the unempiric, that which is beyond the “real,” I would call

“the inspiration of the first cause” or “the divine inspiration,” in a word, that which we call God.

The foregoing may be approximately summarized in one sentence: dynamic form as the creative agent of things is the inspiration of the species. And we may assert with Aristotle: dynamic form as the biologic agent of man is called “soul”—it derives its inspiration from the divine spirit, from the “something” which stands above the species.

MECHANICAL UNDERSTANDING AND MECHANICAL INTUITION

We describe as “mechanical” that understanding with which nature has equipped her creatures for life. They exist in accordance with this understanding, and in accordance with it they forge the links of the chain of causality.

Mechanical understanding is the possession of all creation. It is indivisible from the material—and it is in fact the dynamic which is imbedded in the material, so that it may achieve form. Nevertheless, the leap of the “thing” from “being” into “becoming” is a leap into the future. The future already lies inherent in the urge to motion as such, both as organic idea and as effective force. For the leap into the future, however, there is needed another factor: the leaf conceals in its tiny boles the future buds from which new leaves shall spring, and the plant delivers part of its nourishment to the future buds to sustain the leaf of the future. Part of the nourishment of every living thing is diverted to the

building of seed. The foreboding of the future cannot be achieved by the mechanical understanding alone—for that intuition is necessary. In order to maintain the eternal process of becoming, nature has supplied her creation with mechanical intuition.

We give the name intuition to that faculty which the living thing calls into play when the understanding or intelligence resigns and can no longer function logically. When, for instance, a downward-thrusting root encounters a stone (or, as happens in an experiment, steel) and cannot split it, it seeks ways of getting round it.

No school of philosophy, and no scientific theory—with the exception of the law of natural selection—has yet been able to offer an explanation for the astounding wastefulness of nature. Even less intelligible, indeed, almost inconceivable, in the light of our acquired susceptibilities, is the brutal war of destruction which rages throughout the whole range of nature in all of her processes, and which rises to its extremest ferocity among those of her creations which have definitely been equipped with mechanical intuition, from the lowest species of plant to the highest animal species. This wastefulness of nature's is explained by the protagonists of the theory of evolution as the struggle of selection, the aim of which is to provide for the survival of the strongest, and of the strongest alone.

We shall not take it upon ourselves to examine this ancient problem from a new perspective, though we find it incomprehensible that nature should be forced to employ means which to our present way of thought seem so utterly cruel. We are only concerned with the record,

and permit ourselves to offer a definition: All those efforts which have been made to improve on the "defects" of nature, and all the discoveries which life has achieved for self-protection in this struggle (not the weapons which nature has supplied to it in the form of horns, fangs, swiftness, the ability to climb, etc., but the supplementary instruments which it has added to its natural equipment) we shall call

CREATIVE UNDERSTANDING AND CREATIVE INTUITION

We do not know whether there exists outside of man a species which, in the struggle, makes use of supplementary equipment. We know, of course, that apes throw coconuts down from trees, but we do not know of apes which arm themselves with branches when they are attacked by stronger animals. Our civilization is still too young, and we have not had the time to observe whether, for instance, the model social organization of the bees and ants in the building of their colonies, as well as in the division of labor and in the slow, systematic accumulation of results, betokens a creative intelligence or whether (as is more probable) it merely bespeaks a mechanism of order linked to the character of its form, such as may be observed in the no less complicated and marvelous structure of matter.

We must not deceive ourselves as to the highly significant social systems, based on understanding and order, which obtain among certain living things, some of them even in the plant world. We know, for example, that the organization of certain varieties of plants—the

tree, for instance—is not less complicated and significant than what we find in the animal world. The question with which we are here concerned is not directed at the system as we find it now, in its perfected form, but at the evolution of creative sensitivity, at the daily growth and the hourly change, at the indications of an indigenous intuition which become increasingly evident in such an organization. We know, for instance, that the higher a creature is in its final, realized form, the longer is the time it needs in order to develop out of its husks, and the more slowly does it develop from its beginnings. Man as embryo passes through the stages of the worm and the fish, and yet in his final, realized form he is man.

No investigator has yet come forward with the report that there are ants or birds which make use of tools in the construction of their nests. Observation has only taught us the astounding fact that for their constructions ants drag pieces of wood from a distance. But we do not know whether they do this of their own free will, and consciously, equipped so to speak with a membership card in a communistic organization, or whether, like the angels in their songs of praise, they act without choice and decision and understanding, being bound to their actions only by their nature.

In the inventory of nature the two essential principles are present, ineluctable law and pity. It is known that the field sparrow will nourish the abandoned young of another species—but we do not know whether the bird is acting thus on “philanthropic impulse” or because the feeding of the young of another species is part of its

innate character. And just as we do not consider the bird of prey responsible for its killings, so we are not grateful to the animal which gives evidence of "humane" inclinations. What experience and observation have taught us so far is that the purely intuitive emotion—the sensitivity which is set in motion by a free will and which is inspired by a higher source than the instinct of self-preservation—has appeared in only one creature, man.

If we review the long process of the becoming of man, we are driven to the conclusion that someone or other has called upon man's help, and has added the faculties of creative understanding and creative intuition to his brain—and even if this was not done with the purpose of creating new natural laws, to renew and add to the old ones, then it was done in order to open up the path of creative order, so that the creative spirit might be set in motion, and might in this wise become a participant in the process of creation.

Nature as agent is incomprehensibly devoid of any function of individuality, such as may be found in the slightest of her creatures. She knows, in the individual sense, neither good nor evil, neither death nor life. Death and life, i.e., the form of binding and loosening, are throughout the later discoveries of the individual creatures, which have personified these concepts in accordance with their own standards. They designate as "life" whatever flows into its form, "death" whatever loosens itself from form. But in nature everything is "life," whatever be the form in which matter may find itself. Since, then, the question of "life" and "death" is elim-

inated from nature, there falls away correspondingly the question of "good" and "evil," "just" and "unjust." All these concepts are emotional products of much later developed individual forms. To apply them to nature would be the same as to attempt to turn back time. Nature knows no individuality, she knows only the great wholeness of life, in whatever form and condition this finds itself. It is the material out of which, in accordance with fixed principles and methods, she models the various forms into which the individual species are divided at the highest stages of their development.

Even if the upbuilding of the individual species out of the stuff of life proceeds under the sign of an immeasurably rich and complicated concept, it is still linked direct to nature, is subject to her laws, is still dependent to some extent on the umbilical cord. And however complicated and significant the upbuilding of the organs may be, it was already implicit in the dynamic possibilities of the given form. It is to this end that nature—already having in view the survival of the species—equipped the individual with limbs as well as with systems of mechanical understanding. Man is the only living thing which has created supplementary instruments to help itself out. The animal accepts its destiny. It confronts the laws of nature helplessly. When the sun sets in the primal forest the animal can do no more than break into a bitter, lamentation over its wretched fate. But man stretches his arms out toward the heavens and seeks to arrest the sun. . . .

Professor Curie steps out from the courtyard of the Pasteur Institute sunk deep in thought; he is looking

for the magic power which will liberate the element radium from the ore in which it is fastened. He has seen the new element clearly, has fixed its specific weight, has found its place in the table of the elements and investigated its characteristics. The last step is still to be achieved—the isolation of radium in pure form. Curie feels how important his discovery is. He asks himself in astonishment why nature has thus far kept this element concealed in her dark arcanum. But meanwhile Professor Curie does not observe that a wagon drawn by two horses is bearing down upon him. An instant later he is in the power of death. He feels suddenly a weight pressing on his heart. Before he is quite aware of what has happened, everything suddenly becomes dark for him, and the all but liberated idea of the isolation of the magic element, so important for the creative process of nature, is broken off and disappears for ever.

Now let us analyze what has happened here:

In the dimensions of time and space there was a clash of two bodies. Both sought to occupy the same spot. Thereupon that happened which always happens according to the laws of causality: the weaker body was flung down, trampled upon, and destroyed by the stronger body. Nature, the possessor of the great economic unit which is the totality of creation, has suffered no loss thereby. The elements have been dissolved, but in time each of them will be re-absorbed into a material structure. Nature therefore cannot even complain of a diminution in her living inventory. She has no such thing as a death inventory, for in her economy everything is alive. And the few atoms, together with their

electrons, which constituted the body of Professor Curie, will find their way to some other little division of matter. But toward that which has really been lost with the destruction of the organism known as Curie, toward the irreplaceable good which was his spirit, toward his thoughts on radium, nature stands in no relation whatsoever. She has nothing to do with the spirit. Had the discovery of radium by the human brain been in any wise part of the program of nature, predestined in the same sense as the complicated mechanical organization of every species, then nature would have seen to it that the casing of the material which was Professor Curie's brain should be of such steel-like hardness as to resist the pressure of a horse's hoofs. The human spirit plays, in the preservation of the species, man, at least the same role as the diet of leaves in the life of the giraffe. Nature has provided for the need of the latter by equipping it with a long neck. She has provided that the rhinoceros shall have a hard pointed horn for protection against enemies, and that the bird of paradise shall have a multi-colored tail with which to woo the female and insure offspring. Even so she could, in view of her prodigality, and of the rich human material which she had at her disposal—not to mention the aeons of time which have elapsed since man was separated from the rest of the animal world—without difficulty have taken the right measures for the protection of Professor Curie in that particular situation. She did not do it—it was not on her program.

The body of Professor Curie, in dimensions somewhat superior to the dog and somewhat inferior to the horse,

was constituted of matter in certain definite chemical combinations, and accordingly subject to the laws of nature. But like Prometheus fastened to the rock, Professor Curie was chained to the laws of nature only with his body. Caught in the web of her tapestry, he nevertheless dares to withdraw his arm from the competence of her power, and like his distant forbear, seeks to arrest the course of the sun. Prisoner of nature, he nevertheless stands above her, and, peering into her modes and laws, he plans to lay chains upon her, so that he may command her. And while, in consequence of the power which nature has over him, his body is trodden under-foot like a worm, his dying hand passes on to his human brothers the wonder-element which nature has long kept concealed in her dark places. In the hand of man that element shall unfold its creative activity, and thereby help out blind and dumb nature in the task which has been assigned to her—the creation of life. And to this action Professor Curie was called and predestined by a higher power.

Chapter Three

RELIGION

Creative understanding and creative intuition can only provide man with protection and physical comfort, and, in rare philosophic cases, perhaps with the security of harmony. Solace it could in no wise bring him. Subject to the fatality of his destiny, man, even when he seemed to have rid himself of his bonds, fell into the abyss and found no hold for his foot. Nature held him in the savage fangs of her laws as if he were a trembling, twitching mouse. Precisely because of his new sensitivities he perceives only now the full wretchedness of his state; as though a man who had reason to believe that he was being led before the queen, were conducted blindfolded to prison, and, when the bandage was removed from his eyes, saw about him only the black walls of his cell. That is why the first creations of man in the spiritual realm, the first concepts he formed of the gods, were shot through with a fatalistic and tragic element, associated with horrible rituals, haunted by frightful forebodings which man brought with him out of the primal forest.

In the dense night which closed threateningly upon him his hand groped uncertainly for a point of support, for a link with that which stands above nature. He

stretched the strings of his intuition to their highest sensitivity and receptivity, he focused his hearing intently upon dumb, soundless space, seeking a connection with the primal source, whose existence he dimly suspected.

All religions (to the extent that they can be described as such) until the proclamation of the single, living God by Abraham were—and the religion of the Greek does not form an exception—dominated by an unresolved spirit of tragedy. They laid upon the necks of their followers the halter of a heavy fatality.

RELIGION AND FAITH

Religion is not yet faith. Religion is an act of subordination, a contract between two unequal partners, between master and slave. The master exacts from the slave unqualified obedience and blind belief. Feeling and inner belonging have no part in this. The lord and master undertakes to protect; I undertake to serve him. If my master fails me, if he cannot protect me from my enemies, it signifies that the God of my enemies is stronger than mine: then I will hire myself out to that other God, for I am not bound to mine by an inner relationship. I accepted him as my protector only so long as he could demonstrate his power.

Faith, on the other hand, is something totally different. Every faith is, in its basic nature, connected with doubt. Faith is an inner belonging, immediate contact with God. Faith implies not only God believed in, but the

believing God; it is the obverse side, a part of the God-head. That is the eternal common bond. Faith is emotion, passion.

Faith can exist without a definite religion, for it is abstract, and has no forms. As against that, religion is concrete. Faith is faith in a God. Religion is the belief in a given God (the Jewish, the Mohammedan, the Christian). True faith finds expression in devotion. But it happens often enough that a man belongs to a religion without having any devotion. . . .

I do not, of course, underrate the role played by the form and ritual of a religion in the development of the character of man—but of this more later. I am not a specialist in the religions which preceded the Abrahamitic monotheism, but I take it that before Abraham's utterance of faith there existed only religions. Man chose himself a protector in this or that form and offered him tribute in sacrifice. As soon as man lost confidence in him (which happened when his God was worsted by another) he exchanged him. This may very well explain the circumstance that when a nation went down in war, its religion went down with it. (In many instances, particularly in Oriental absolutism, the divinity concentrated itself upon a single point from which it could not be dislodged: unbounded kingship). If there was in certain earlier religions an element of monotheism, these have not come down to us, that is, they have exerted no influence on us. We may take for granted the possibility that the Abrahamitic monotheism incorporated a great deal from other Oriental religions, and was correspond-

ingly influenced by them. What has come down to us, however, is the final result. The European ethic as we know it has its foundation in the Abrahamitic monotheism brought to the world at large through Christianity.

Abraham's monotheism is the first to display the specific central characteristic of faith—passion.

According to the Bible, God made a covenant with Abraham. But in this word, "covenant," the party of the first part acknowledges the equality of rights of the party of the second part; the God of Abraham was grateful for Abraham's faith in him. "He believed in God, and God" counted it to him for righteousness, is what we are told in Genesis (15:6). Faith is love. Abraham did not only believe in God—he also loved him. For faith is passion.

"Let all thy weaknesses be uncovered like a naked shame before all my enemies, let the base scorn and revile thee—I shall cling to thee, for thou and I make but one." It seems to me that even thus the Jewish people may have addressed its God throughout all the years of its oppression.

The later commentators tell us that at the time of the making of the covenant God unveiled to Abraham the long and bitter road of suffering which the Jewish people was to traverse in exile—and yet Abraham stayed by his election.

This close-clinging to God, this unification with God beyond one's own destiny (which is nature), was the extreme of human striving, and is the highest that man

has achieved. It is thus that we must understand the wrestling of Jacob with the angel; and the final word, "I will not let thee go until thou bless me" signifies a breaking loose from fatality, a binding with the divinity.

In the heavy night which engulfs us we, tangled in the net of our fate, have stretched out our hand and laid hold of the finger of God. And in him we seek support. However crushing the destiny which is suspended above our heads, we shall cling to God, and no gloomy theories out of the evil springs of the night, no Pascal and no other prophet of the darkness, shall fling us back into the prison house of fatalism. For by his bond with God man has become independent of his fate, if not in the body then in the spirit; he has made a peculiar place for himself among all creatures and has lifted himself from the "species" to "personality." Through the divinity he has himself become "one and unique."

As long as man was species, namely, as long as man possessed no individual personality, he could not attain to the one and single God, but only to nature, to the agent. When man had lifted himself to personal individuality, when he had himself become "one and single," only then could he break out beyond his destiny and attain to the unity of God in order to be linked with it. The great poet Yehudah ha-Levi has given us this image: "As I went out to seek thee, thou camest out to meet me."

To sum up: man as species is, like every other creature, subject to nature and to nature's laws; man as

personality has risen above nature and, inspired by faith, has come under the grace of God.

THE FULL WELL

All religions other than the monotheistic faith, as perceived by Abraham, may be likened to a well which men have themselves filled with water.

The creative spirit of man can find expression only in concrete forms. He draws inspiration from the abstract, but he can put forth only the concrete. All that which the spirit of man has stored up in the concrete I call religion.

God created man in His own image. Man, however, created Him in his, man's, image, and endowed Him with his, man's, nature. From earliest times man brought whatever he considered the best and most beautiful as tribute to his deity, and endowed Him therewith—from the rawest qualities of primitive man to the highest and most subtle attributes, like idealism and morality. Every generation brought to its deity the fruit of its time, and it was always that which was then considered the costliest and the highest, from the strength of the fighter to the surrender of the weak. Every people formed and modeled its divinity on the ideal of its own character. Thus divinity became a gathering point, a center of precipitation for all the human qualities which a people, a tribe, or a religious community had brought forth in the course of the generations.

We have compared it to a well which the dwellers

round about have filled with water. But the question arises: Where did these people take the water? It is here that the mutual interaction manifests itself:

Men drew their inspiration from a God and hammered it out into the precious ornaments of ideal values (in accordance, naturally, with the concepts of the time and tribe), the strength of Zeus no less than the beauty of Venus among the Greeks. In this wise, the single generations passed on their heritages to each other, not direct, but via divinity. Religion became so to speak a gathering center for heirlooms, a concentration of ethical capital, and thus worked back upon man.

The process which unfolded here had three stages: by the acquisition of a personality man established contact with God and drew inspiration from him. This inspiration he reworked and passed it on to divinity. Divinity became enriched by the ethical behavior of man. It works back upon man now through the medium of ideals which embody human qualities.

This stored-up heritage of the many generations which poured water into the well went to the forming of the peculiar racial, folk, and national qualities. Each of them bore the character of its specific soil. Thus life, in continuous creation, was confined to firm channels, and its waters poured into the national basin. All this is religion and has nothing to do with faith.

THE GRACE OF LOVE AND THE GRACE OF THE EROS

The high-water mark of human achievement was undoubtedly the Greek civilization. But Greek philosophy and art, the loveliest flowers in the garden of human culture, were not endowed with joy; on the contrary, they were shot through with the element of tragedy, and in their being they were devoid of hope. They have brought us to the brink of tragic perfection—Nirvana.

The grace which radiates upon us from the Greek culture is bounded, for it is chained to form. It is not a song without words, but it is bound to word and line. That is why it is limited dimensionally. I may permit myself to put it thus: it has present, but no future, for it is perfection, but it is not the road to perfection.

The Eros, in its highest, noblest form, faithfulness, is confined to its own tragic destiny, to the present and to the individual. That is why it does not possess the grace of the common joy. For even when the Greeks attained to the harmony of the soul they were unable to achieve that common joy which is the radiation of faith. For they had no faith; they had only religion. They embodied their ideals in symbols and made them into a religion. To this religion their art and philosophy could impart beauty and enjoyment as well as fatalistic resignation, but no creative joy.

The death of Socrates is characteristic of the Greek outlook upon life and the world. Plato has ascribed to Socrates all that is best and most beautiful; he points to him as the embodiment of the Greek ideal of culture. According to Plato's Phaedo, Socrates attains to the

highest stage possible, that of the immortality of the soul. But in his very last hour, when he feels death close upon him, he turns to the living and says to his friend Krito:

“Krito, we owe Aesculapius a cock; do not forget to give it to him.”

The manly death of Socrates which so many have—in their fantasy at least—imitated, seems to me to be thoroughly inhuman, completely fatalistic. How lonely, how devoid of a legacy this Socrates must have felt, having nothing to leave behind him as he approached the threshold of death. How lonely he must have been when, with such a strong heart and heroic gesture, he threw the burden from himself, shook off the life of this world and rendered thanks to the gods for his recovery in death.

The Socratic gesture is not the consequence of a deep faith that in crossing the threshold of death we shall find a new beginning, a more beautiful and more perfect world for which thanks are due the gods. It is rather an outburst of fatalistic resignation and indifference. For there is no faith in another world where there is no faith in this world. Faithful to the Greek culture based on perfection, Socrates shows himself, at the moment of death, no weakling assailed by terror and doubt; he put his foot on the threshold of death in a pose of heroism and pride. There is nothing to await in the beyond: “I, Socrates, have saved myself out of my hermetically sealed harmonious wholeness; I, Socrates, have drained the last drop from the beaker of perfection—and I have become a god! For divinity is not outside of me, but

reposes within me. I have created it for myself out of my own perfection."

Let us contrast the heroic and godlike death of Socrates with the weak, human death of him who has become for a great part of mankind (and that not the worst part, but the part responsible for our present-day European culture) the symbol of divinity. Socrates died like a god. Jesus died like a weak man.

When Jesus opened the mysterious door leading to the other side, he held himself in for a moment. Then he called like a forlorn child into the luminous darkness which confronted him: "God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He sought the finger of God, which was stretched out to him from the other side. No doubt the modern epigones will call this "Asiatic helplessness." But in that childlike crying out may be heard the new answer: that which lies on the other side of the door is not darkness and emptiness, not fatalistic perfection; out of that darkness there reaches toward us the hand of God, to which we cling.

Moses did not throw the world off, even though for him, the legend tells, the heavens opened at his death and God came toward him to draw forth his soul with a kiss. On Mount Horeb Moses wanted at least to catch a glimpse of the soil on which his people was to settle.

But we do not negate this world, we do not throw it away behind us when we leave it. We include it in the reckoning. Even in our death we are bound to it in an indissoluble whole. For we do not die lonely, we leave heirs behind us. We are woven into one another through the garment of "life" which we weave in common. We

contract debts to each other. For there is no empty space, there is no fence, behind which we can find separation. We must come to each other's help—and we must accept help from each other. For we are the children of one father. And when we take our departure we pay our debts with a single weak, human word: "Forgive!"

Chapter Four

FAITH

Everything that we have up to this point ascribed to man, man has developed for himself by means of the powers which were coiled up in the potentiality of his embryo. These powers man conquered for himself in and through the experience of epochs, in evolutionary transformations. Even the highest inspiration, which towers into God-thirst and God-search, he created for himself through intuitions which are additional radiations of his intellect out of the dark and hidden spheres to which the intelligence alone has no access. But all this already existed—if not in actuality then in thought—within the potentiality of his native intelligence. It is with this power that he stepped out beyond the limitations of the sheer necessities of his factual life, to enter into unreal and fantastic realms. In order to lengthen his life he created for himself a second world with a Parnassus of gods and even attained to the highest development of Greek philosophy—to a harmony of the ends of the soul.

It is even probable that the need of God is part of the equipment of existence for man. All students of primitive people tell us that they find traces of god worship in the lowest strata of tribal life, whether it be in the form

of demons, spirits, and natural phenomena, or in ancestor worship. To a greater or smaller extent they have entered into definite relationship with these gods by the payment of tribute or sacrifice, or else they seek to keep the gods at a distance by frightening them off with the masks of devils and evil spirits. All these forms of worship, from the most primitive to the most highly developed, are—to use the expression of the great Hebrew poet, Solomon ibn Gabirol—only the expression of the longing to serve the one God: “In their worship of the gods, they mean but to serve Thee.”

All these forms of idol worship, from the lowest to the highest—including even those which have developed supreme moral values, like a Socrates, an Aristotle, or a Plato, and which all but puts them on common ground with the believers in the one God—men have evolved with the power of their *own* intelligence; and they are therefore locked and confined within the narrow framework of human limitation. However far these inspirations may reach in their growth, they are the fruit of the gardeners who have planted them; they are watered by the wells which man himself has filled. And because their aspirations, no matter how far the radiations go, have not been derived from the first source, the creator, but from the agent, the created, their moral results are locked in their own framework of change and dissolution.

The particular worship of a primitive people, its homely demons and spirits, endured only as long as the people was not conquered by another tribe. When they passed under the rule of another tribe, they passed also

to the worship of its demons, which were stronger than their own. The philosophic-moralistic proofs of the Greek philosophers carried no obligation with them. The identical intelligence which demonstrated the existence of the harmony of the soul, or the necessity of a moral life, used the same methods to demonstrate the beliefs of the Epicurean school, to wit, that not the gods decide the destiny of man, but the fixed laws of nature. Therefore, the discourse continued, man should fear neither the gods nor death, for nothing could change the fate of man.

In Tarshish, the city of merchants and philosophers, young Saul encountered the Stoic teachers who during the day preached in the academies the high ethical lore of the founder of their school, Athenadorus. Certain of the sayings of Athenadorus have been preserved for us by Seneca, and they could easily be fitted into the Ethics of the Fathers or the sayings of the Apostles. But when evening fell in Tarshish, and the city was gay with color and flooded with the sound of flutes and cymbals, these same Stoics sold their souls for a plate of swine-flesh and a mouthful of sweet wine. "They ate so that they might be able to puke, and they puked so that they might be able to eat." They went in search of the degraded sexual perversities concerning which Paul speaks with such contempt. Tarshish was the melting pot in which seethed the unrestrained dissoluteness of the Orient side by side with the brutal sophistication of the Greeks. And who can tell whether these pictures of the base and polluted life of the Hellenic Greeks upon which Paul must have gazed in his youth did not play an important role in his

ultimate decision to become “the apostle to the gentiles,” so that he might bring them the message of faith?

Seneca, whose Stoic philosophy had reached such a high moral plane that some Christian scholars believe him to have been a secret convert to Christianity, this same Seneca who preached a life of Stoic retirement and modesty, and who believed that “death is a liberation, for it is the birth of eternity,” did not, however, withdraw from life. On the contrary, his life was steeped in the exaggerated and dissolute luxury which he permitted himself to receive from the hands of his savage pupil, Nero.

And it was not only in its decadent or Hellenistic period that Greek moral theory imposed no obligations; even in the time of Socrates and Plato it remained an isolated system of intellectual exercise; it was intended exclusively for the cultivated aristocrat, for the Aristotelian “intelligent animal,” without moral influence on the life of the masses or upon life in general and without achieving in any degree the moral improvement of the character of the people.

“What is man that thou art mindful of him?” Our brain is built up of the same chemical materials as the other parts of our body and is subject to the same conditions. The product of our intelligence, like the creation of any other organ or instrument of the senses, is confined and locked within the circle of our nature. With all the wealth of our experience we are like blind worms crawling about in the narrow gutters which we have burrowed out with our proboscid intelligence. How do we dare to expect that by means of our senses, locked as

they are in the limitations of matter, we shall break through to that which is concealed from us—that for which there is no means of apprehension in the range of our concepts, and no expression in the range of our language, namely, the divine? We have not the instruments with which to apprehend it. “We can express the divine,” says Maimonides, “not in that which it is or has, but in that which it is not. It is infinite, it is timeless, it is incomprehensible.” Not only are we unable to comprehend the creator, but, with all our experience, even his work is hidden from us behind a thousand seals. Nor is this inability of ours confined to the work of God about us. It applies to us, to ourselves; for who of us can say that he knows himself and what he is? Who can understand his own personality? How many “I’s” are there in a man? And though the theories of Freud have been distorted and exploited by speculative trickery—to the undeserved discrediting of Freud—it cannot be denied that his methods have opened new channels into the dark labyrinth of our inner being, and who can tell what the ultimate results of these penetrations will reveal? “Thou shalt not believe in thyself until the day of thy death,” our Rabbis taught us. If we do not know ourselves, if we still stand like strangers before the closed doors of our own confinement, how do we dare to expect that the gates of heaven will open for us?

The lantern—the intelligence—which the gods have hung upon our necks so that it may guide us through the labyrinth of our being, sends out its beams in opposite directions. The genius of the Germans which created the romantic school of literature and the idealistic school of

philosophy, also created the rationalist school of Fichte and Hegel and the superman of Nietzsche and Spengler. These are the theoretical forerunners of that demon-worship which we know as Hitlerism and Nazism; and the ritual of that worship includes not only the destruction of the material achievements of our civilization; it is designed not less certainly to destroy our moral heritage, to wipe out our belief in prophetic inspiration, and to thrust the world back into the idol-worship of the darkest ages.

No, it is not the human instinct, no matter how deep it bores its canals through the unknown which is about us, and it is not the intelligence, with all its delicate instruments for the weighing and measuring of our experiences; it is not these which were capable of bringing to man the salvation of the one, universal, living God. The obligation of a moral life, regulated by just laws and godliness, which proceeds from faith, could reach man only as a categorical principle, dictated by an independent power which is not in man and which is, like the divinity itself, beyond understanding and beyond conceiving. This is the authority or the mandate which divinity entrusted to its chosen ones, to those destined to it from their birth, the prophetic spirits sought out by the divinity and possessing the divine inspiration.

It is utterly impossible to apprehend faith, or to have faith in faith, save by faith itself; there is no other instrument in our possession which is capable of taking hold of it. It slips out from the instruments of the senses. Every intellectual proof which the intelligence brings in favor of it can be countered by an intellectual proof in

the contrary sense. Even the instinct can be misled in the dark coils of our lusts and passions. We are capable of receiving faith in our instinctive concepts only by means of the heavenly grace entrusted to the relevant prophet in the form of the authority to bring it to man as a revelation of the divine will.

It could not have been otherwise.

Faith in itself is already a beginning of divinity. It is as though the divinity, desiring to bring salvation to man, was compelled to throw out a divine bridge from the heavenly sphere across the abyss of our earthly confinement. For faith is not confined to the factual, is not confined to the thing alone, as the intelligence is, but is endless, breaks out from the framework of our intellectual compulsion and sweeps over unbounded heavenly spheres to which man had no access until the coming of faith. In other words: the instruments of perception by means of which we acquire experiences are adapted only to earthly and limited concepts. Our understanding serves us to the extent that the instrument of intelligence can snatch at experience, and is limited only to the experienced. But by means of faith we step out of our human nature. We ourselves become a part of divinity, for a life line has been thrown to us, in the sea of our human isolation, out of the divine rescue ship.

Only faith in a heavenly father, who confided his will or authority, for our salvation, to his elected ones, can obligate us to an ethical life; for only in him have we a balance in which to weigh values. The values are those which accord with the substance of God's will, which he has revealed to us through his elected ones; whatever

does not so accord is evil, and is of the devil. The ethical life to which the intelligence binds us is a voluntary one, and can be transposed in the opposite direction when the intelligence is bound to something else. Only those ethical values which flow from the divine will are eternal and unchangeable.

"The awe of God is the beginning of wisdom," our Jewish sages teach us: the first radiation of divinity is awe of the divinity. Divinity is not an isolated, celestial essence which, at one time and with a single act, created man and then abandoned him to the wild beast which is nature. Nor is divinity activated by a single injection of influence, which God imparted to it at the beginning as an unalterable, static law, without possibility of adaptation and variation. No; I am in consistent contact with the Creator through the providence of the individual, and that at every moment in my life. With every breath I draw I renew my relationship with God—because of the knowledge that it is done with his will. Only the personal God whose eye is bent upon me daily and who consistently guides my path can lift me above my worm-like existence, and become a fount of inspiration in me for the noblest and purest deeds. Only this faith in an individual providence carries with it all the blessings which faith has to give. Everything else, which limits the divinity to a static condition, is an affront to God and a reversion to the death-dealing idol of fate.

Faith is not granted; faith must be conquered and acquired by man. "Everything is in the hand of God save the fear of God"; this was what the Rabbis taught. The Christian faith teaches that it is impossible to acquire

faith without the grace of heaven; for faith is election, grace, and the highest endowment which man possesses. It is mightier than death; it is more faithful than a mother; it has more love to impart than the most loving wife. . . .

In the depth of the night, on your lonely bed, when you sink into the bottomless darkness, you feel faith near to your heart, like a beloved wife; her arms are about you, and their sweetness pours more happiness into you, more boundless, eternally brimming joy than the passionate arms of your beloved.

Faith is not just the staff of the ages, upon which you may lean as you cross the threshold between this world and the next. It is that, but it is also more; for it is chiefly a sunny guide which illuminates with bliss the path of your life; it is a young mother who leads you by the hand through the labyrinths of your mysterious self.

To have faith one must possess a certain talent, even as for art; indeed, faith is the highest form of art. It is that which imparts a higher logic to the other forms of art. Without faith the noblest music is a confusion of tones. Via faith music is transformed into that divine, harmonious language which speaks to our hearts and lifts us to higher spheres. Single, isolated patches of light and shadow fall from the setting sun upon the cornea of our eyes; faith is that which gathers and brings into focus the single tones or patches of color and transmits them to our senses as a harmony of form which fills our hearts with lofty inspiration and godly piety. In order to experience this one must be possessed of an

alert heart and ear and eye, which are able to receive faith not less acutely than music and color.

I know that there are people who are tone-deaf and color-blind; even so there are the impotent of faith. They are the "barren" ones. Their senses are endowed only with that mathematical-mechanistic ability where-through nature is confined to the factual. Their senses open only to that earthy substance of which they themselves are compounded. For them my words will be unintelligible. For faith is the latest and youngest of the senses, one which man is still developing, and not all men have acquired it yet. It was probably so with the acquisition of oral sound manipulation—the material of human speech. In the first period of its development, the faculty of speech was confined to the few, the ablest. Later it became the common property of all men. The same course will be followed by the development of the most delicate of the senses, the one which leads us to the supreme heights, to the gates of heaven—the sense of faith.

Faith is the most personal element which man possesses, the most intimate factor of his soul. It is more intimate than one's wife, than love, and even than one's own body. Faith radiates such an impassioned mystic love as leaves behind all other human emotions. We could not otherwise understand the enormous price which man has paid for it. No heavenly reward, no ecstatic vision of bliss beyond the grave visiting the hearts of those who have been martyred for the Jewish faith, comforting them amid the flames of the auto-da-fé, could have evoked that readiness in self-sacrifice which

the Jewish people has shown for its faith. Faith alone could inspire them with this incomprehensible and mystic love and create this incomprehensible bond with God which mocked at all suffering and gave them the capacity to endure everything. An eternal fire burns on the altar of God, and upon it the Jewish people has been the sacrifice from the days of the Greeks until our own times.

And that which is said here concerning the Jews can be applied also to the believers of the Christian faith. From the beginning the Christian Jews transmitted the mystic love of their God to the carriers of the Christian faith. These endowed it with the same feeling of identification with God, and taught themselves to pay for it the same price of the martyr as their fellow-countrymen paid for the Jewish faith. Petronius, proconsul of Syria, stood amazed and aghast at the spectacle of the tens of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children who poured into the seaport of Ptolemaeus and threw themselves upon the ground. The Emperor Caligula proclaimed himself a God and commanded the nations to erect his statue in their temples and offer it sacrifice. All the nations obeyed him with eager sycophancy, the clever Greeks included, substituting the image of the ugly little Roman for that of Zeus, Apollo, and even Venus. The Jews were the only ones who stretched themselves out in the streets; they came all the way from Jerusalem to say to the proconsul: "Only over our dead bodies will you carry the image of the Emperor into the Holy of Holies!" And the Greeks in every city are amazed; they make pogroms on the Jews because they

prevent the statue of the Caesar from being carried into their synagogues; the Greeks send messengers to the all-highest in Rome to complain against the Jews. The Emperor flies into a fury. He issues the command that the Jews shall be taken at their word, and that his image is to be carried into the temple over their prostrate bodies. And the Jews pile themselves like an iron wall before the gates of the temple: "Not while one of us is alive shall you carry the image of a man into our sanctuary." And who can say whether this incredible obstinacy of the Jews was not the most important of the factors which prepared a path later for the Christianity of the other peoples?

The same obstinacy was manifested at the beginning by the members of the early Jewish-Christian congregation of Jerusalem. How amazed Paul—or as he then called himself, Saul—must have been to behold the spirit of self-sacrifice which the members of the Greek-speaking community displayed when he came in the night to drag them from their houses, for the sake of their faith in a crucified Messiah. And who can say whether it was not this spirit of martyrdom, which the Jewish-Christian community had transferred from its Jewish faith to its faith in a Messiah—who can say whether it was not this display which made on Paul the impression which was later to issue in the vision which came to him on the road to Damascus?

And the Jew-Christians infected with their spirit of martyrdom the gentiles. For the first time non-Jewish-Christians displayed readiness to self-sacrifice for their

faith in a Messiah, something which till then had been an exclusive Jewish privilege.

It is hardly credible that all the Christians who let their bodies be consumed upon the blazing crosses kindled by Nero, or who gave themselves to be thrown to the wild beasts in the arena, were deeply instructed, imbued with the profound theological philosophy of a Paul. On the contrary: the majority of Nero's victims were members of the Jewish community of Rome who had accepted the faith in the Messiah: plain and simple workers, gold- and silversmiths, oil-mixers, tentmakers, potters, sellers of perfumes, saddlers—the poorest of the poor; untutored men and women—some of them could hardly read in the scriptures. The inscriptions in both the Jewish and the Christian-Jewish catacombs in Rome give evidence of widespread illiteracy. Very rarely do we find a marble tablet on which the inscription, "Peace upon Israel," frequently encountered in the Jewish and even in the Christian catacombs, is spelled properly. Greek and Jewish inscriptions alike are full of errors—evidence enough that the church in Rome was not composed of educated men and women. It was not only Paul who was active in Rome. Long before his advent the church of Jerusalem had sent its emissaries to Rome, and they made many converts to the Christian faith among the poor of the Jewish community. It is by no means to be believed, then, that the martyrs of the Christian faith who sanctified the Name in those early days, consisted solely or largely of "members of the Imperial court," or even of such as were instructed in Greek or Jewish thought. By far the largest number were

simple and ignorant workers. And the same was true of the Jewish martyrs.

It was not only the spiritual and intellectual élite of the Jews, the Rabbis, and the scholars, who paid for their faith with their lives, for by far the largest part were the “unknown soldiers” of the illiterate masses. The names of the Rabbis who died for the sanctification of the Name have in most instances been preserved in the record; but it would be a gross error to imagine that Rabbis alone suffered death in the Hadrianic persecution which is known in Jewish history as the time of the “Ten Slaughtered by the Government.” In that period, as in all earlier and later periods, from the first Jewish pogroms until the days of Hitler, the large, unknown, and ignorant Jewish masses paid the martyr’s price for their faith. It is they who furnish the sacrifices which burn forever on the altar of faith.

For faith is, primarily, democracy. “I will pour out my spirit upon every soul”—this is the power of faith. Faith, which was brought to us by appointed authority, is not an exclusive philosophic system, delicately distilled from the liquid of the intelligence, accessible only to the “intelligent animal,” and withheld from the masses. Faith in God, brought to us by authority, is a sun which warms all creatures. All have a portion in Israel’s inheritance of God; all the souls of humanity stood at the foot of Sinai. In faith we are all equal, the ignorant with the learned, for it is not intelligence which has imposed it upon us, nor have we reached it through instinct; but it was given to us as the grace of heaven and transmitted by an authority which regards all men as

being alike. Everyone of us has been endowed with the mystic identification with God; everyone of us has his share of the incomprehensible passion. It is for this reason that faith is both the most intimately personal in man and, at the same time, the most diffused commonality of participation in the divine prerogative.

It has happened more than once, both in the Jewish and Christian faiths, that there have arisen subtle and learned men who have sought to lead back faith into Aristotelian ways, to identify divinity with that "effective intelligence" which can be enjoyed only by the "intelligent animal," while the rest of mankind is rigidly excluded. And whenever such an attempt has been made, there has ensued a revolt of the masses against these night watchmen of the intellect. The masses sent out from their own midst spiritual forces which burst through all doors and invaded the sanctuary into which the intellectuals had retreated, carrying with them, as their exclusive intellectual property, the divinity. From their possession it was wrested, as a common good, by the revolting masses and restored to its original function, which is that of a common source of mystic love.

Faith in a universal God, who has made known his unchanging will toward mankind and who maintains a continuous and uninterrupted contact with everyone of his creatures, directing the distinct and separate course of each single one; faith in a God which is capable of evoking an unquenchable and undemonstrable thirst for him, and desire for him, unto and beyond the threshold of death—such faith could not have been inspired by an internal human instinct, by a potentiality which emerges

from within. The human instinct within us could have done nothing more than awake our thirst for the divinity—but it could not have brought us to the source of divinity itself. Nor could it have been acquired for us by our intelligence. The intelligence, with the highest of its possibilities, as they have been expressed during the palmy days of the Greek culture—in the time of Pericles—was only capable of filling the source with waters which it brought from its own well.

The intelligence was, indeed, capable of adorning the divinity with all manner of ornaments or attributes, drawn from the ideals of the intelligence itself. But the ethical life which was the emanation of a necessity of the creature, was accessible only to the aristocratic intellectual; and this ethical life did not carry any compulsion with it. The divine source which could quench the thirst of men with the blessings of faith, could be filled only by a monotheistic divinity—the faith which has been transmitted to us by authority.

In the chaotic and tumultuous darkness which surrounded us, God's hand was suddenly felt, molding man in his own likeness.

I thank Thee and praise Thee, Father in Heaven, that Thou hast made me a son of man in the likeness of Thine own image; I thank Thee and praise Thee that Thou hast chosen me from among all Thy creatures in that Thou hast put into me a soul, a part of Thyselv, that I may fulfill Thy presence and being here. And Thou hast been gracious unto me in that Thou hast revealed Thy will to me through the authority which Thou hast conferred upon Thy messengers and prophets; and Thou

hast further been gracious unto me in that Thou hast given it to me to pass over the abyss of the earthly temporal, which is my own nature, and to attain to the heavenly-incomprehensible, by means of the faith which Thou hast instilled into my heart. Be Thou blessed therefore, father in heaven. May Thy faith stand ever before my eyes and be my guide in all my acts and all my meditations.

Chapter Five

THE FIRST RADIATIONS OF GOD'S AUTHORITY

The finger of God was stretched out and there began the *creatio ex nihilo*; the dimensions began their expansion; there began the separation of order from chaos, of time out of timelessness.

This does not mean that there were no beginnings before, but those cannot be apprehended, cannot be caught up within the range of our senses. We can apprehend only the ruled and the ordered; but this does not mean to say that that which we cannot apprehend has no existence. How truly Maimonides puts it: "Because man is capable of pulling only a light weight we are not to deduce that there are no heavy loads." But for us ordered beings it is the Genesis of ordered creation which is the beginning, and no other.

And in the same way for us—that is, for all those who stand upon the ground of a prophetically proclaimed God—the revelation of the will of God is the beginning of divinity. And every genesis that came before we bring to naught; just as we do with all the subtleties of the Bible critics who have uncovered traces of monotheism among earlier peoples, and who would have us believe that the Mosaic code was a plagiarism from the

Hammurabic. As far as we are concerned, all value belongs exclusively to those spiritual forces which are directly responsible for our conception of divinity—they, and no others, have built up our religious character. Thousands of spermatozoa are shot into the mother-channel—but the child is born of that one which reaches the goal first. . . . I know there are intellectuals in whose opinion the Buddhistic Nirvana is the achievement of the highest perfection. There was a time when Bostonian aesthetes went to Japan in search of the soul's salvation. But for our sort Buddhistic Nirvana is not a salvation of the soul but a destruction of the soul.

Our Genesis or *Bereshit* begins with:

“*Bereshit bara Elohim*—In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

To me it seems that no human speech, and no human utterance in any form, is capable of rendering the heroic character of creation as it has been rendered in the brief Biblical utterance. In the book of Genesis we become participants in the act of creation. Our souls pass through all the transformations and transmigrations which man has undergone from the first beginning down to the fastening on to God. Who has lifted us up to the heavens? Who has made us participants in the days of creation, if not the word of God which is revealed in the book of Genesis?

All the achievements of our geologic science, such as the measurement of the age of the earth by the formations of the rocks, or by the order of the strata, or by the rate of the breakdown of the element known as radium, and its transmutation into other elements—all these give

us a faint notion of the age of the earth. Even the theory of the stars, the study of the formation of the celestial bodies, and the measurement of the velocity of light—in brief, everything that science has recorded in its own domain—have not been able to evoke in us that awe of God which descends upon us out of the picture of the vastness of creation which is contained in the few short chapters of Genesis. The breath of God is in them. The process of creation penetrates our bodies and our souls—for it was for us that creation was meant. We are not just a driven leaf in the fierce whirlwind of the worlds; we are the chosen ones who sit on little stools at the foot of the creator, and he passes in review before us, as our heritage, the inventory of his creation. We are lifted up out of the mass and body of creation, we stand above it and govern it, because we are its inheritors.

The time which elapsed between the beginning and the choosing of man by the authority set apart for him can be divided into three periods. These periods must be measured not by man's time, but by God's time; nor can we say that a "thousand years are as a day with God," for time has within itself the timelessness of God, and cannot be transposed into our measure.

The first period is from the beginning or Genesis until the creation of man. Throughout these six days we hear the whirring of the wheels of creation. The spirit of God broods upon the *tohu u-bohu*; the spirit of God, which bears within itself all achievements and even all possibilities, all the experiences and transformations through which man will pass from his worm-beginnings until the last of days, when the divinity will unfold upon

all the earth, are coiled within “the spirit of God.” What artist could have been capable of transmitting the mighty picture which is conveyed by the words: “And the earth was without form and void...and the spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters?” A shudder of awe passes through us at the sound of these simple words.

Let us mark well what follows. Concerning that which he had created, God did not observe that it was beautiful. He saw that it was “good.” That concept of the “good” already mirrors the whole ideal of the Jewish-Christian world outlook. God unveils himself in the Jewish concept of the “good” and not in the Greek concept of the “beautiful”; for “good” is eternal and changeless and implies the complete harmony of divinity, whereas the “beautiful” is but a single attribute. The good contains within itself the beautiful; but the reverse is not true.

According to the Talmud man was created a hermaphrodite, and the two sexes were united. “Male and female he created them.” It was only later that the sexes were divided out.

And it is characteristic of the outset of creation that it already contained the day of rest: “And God rested on the seventh day.” According to the Jewish tradition the Sabbath was already given to Adam, the first man.

It is likewise characteristic for the Jewish-Christian world outlook that, according to the Talmud, the Messiah was one of the six things which God had in mind before the creation of the world. In the legends of the Jews the Messiah occupies a place of equal importance

with the Torah, or law, and both of them were said to have been created before the creation of the world.

The second period of the traditional creation begins with the first sin of Adam and closes with the covenant which God made with Abraham. This period is devoted exclusively to the evolution of man. Here we have no men, in the simple sense of the word, living in time. They are giants, heroes, born of the commerce of the sons of Elohim with the daughters of man, themselves half gods, whose life duration is reckoned by centuries. They are the discoverers of hunting, of tents, and of sheep-breeding, the inventors of musical instruments and weapons—the generation of the flood, good and evil mixed.

This period is filled with man's struggle with demons, and with himself. We get the impression that all the transformations and transmigrations of man are unrolled before us—from fratricide up to the highest recognition of the divinity. We witness the wrestling of man with himself and with nature; we witness the cursing of the earth: “thorns shall it bring forth for thee, in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread, and thou shalt return to the earth from which thou hast been taken, for earth thou art and to earth thou returnest.” God has compassion on His creature, man, and does not withdraw His grace from him. The dark period in which good and evil struggle for the mastery, and to which we may point the verse from Isaiah: “He hath created light and hath created darkness”—that dark period is already illumined by the lamp which God has suspended on high. These are the first rays of authority. Evil is sundered

from good; there have emerged weights and measures for the evaluation of things. And Enoch is with God. He disappears, for "God hath taken him." Noah and all those who belong to him are saved from the flood, and God puts up a sign of salvation for all the creatures of the earth. All the zigzag courses through which man is to pass in later epochs of history, all the heights and valleys, are already mirrored in this epoch.

And yet clear across the period of the generation of the flood is drawn the thread of divinity, the logic of history, which rises to its climax in the recognition of the one living God by Abraham.

With Abraham begins the third period of the creation.

That third period of the "beginning" is constituted by our three patriarchs and by all those who are converted through them and in them to the prophetic religion. In them, in these patriarchs, all of us are already present. In and through them all of us are formed. Symbols or living personalities, projections of the imagination of man or actual flesh and blood of man, they are more alive than millions upon millions who have been known to be alive, for the effect of their living has become the cornerstone of our civilization.

First to emerge from the chaos of the generations is the patriarch Abraham. massive as a mountain the foundations of which are planted in the earth while the white, flashing summit of snow pierces the heavens. In my childhood imagination I saw Abraham as a giant who holds in his hand an ax, with which he smashes the idols of his father Terah. Concerning Abraham the Jewish tradition says the following: "Until the coming of

Abraham God was the king only of the heavens; but Abraham came and crowned him the king of the earth too."

This summation of Abraham contains the full role which Abraham plays in the development of our religious heritage.

Until Abraham there was no faith. For faith, as we have said, is the belonging to God. Until Abraham God was a demon which men feared and sought either to appease or avoid. Abraham was the first to place the crown upon God—not as king, indeed, but as the God of the earth. Abraham is designated, and is, the friend of God; he believes in God, and God accounts this to him as a virtue—he makes a covenant with him. And not with him alone, but with all his "seed," with all his posterity. We all who are of the seed of Abraham, whether in the flesh or in the spirit, whether his physical and spiritual children, have been included in the covenant which Abraham made with God in our name.

In Abraham we already see manifested all the elements of pure faith. It is indeed a remarkable feature of this record: the friend, one might say the personal friend, of God, to whom God sends his messengers, the angels, and to and from whose tent the angels run like messenger boys in and out of an office, this friend of God scarcely ever has recourse to miracles when he is in need of them. What characterizes the patriarchs is that they are not of the half-gods, like the generations which preceded them; they are men, who live their daily lives according to the rules and habits of all ordinary men. Abraham deals with the angels not as with angels, but

as with men. When they appear before his door by the oak of Mamre he begs them to wash their feet and puts himself at their service. Sarah laughs behind the door when she hears the angels, like good neighbors, comforting the old man, telling him that he will yet have children by his old wife. And Abraham does not hesitate to bargain with God regarding the number of good men for whose sake the city of Sodom shall be saved. Abraham bargains with him as with an equal. Nor does Abraham have recourse to an angel, or to a miracle, when he comes to Gerar and is afraid that Abimelech the King will take away his wife and kill him. Instead he makes use of a simple lie, which the Bible does not hesitate to reveal. Our Bible did not transform our patriarchs into ideal figures, after the fashion of the Greek myths, which made heroes and gods of their eponyms; the Biblical record leaves them what they were — plain, weak men.

And accordingly, in this connection, God is not a God of miracles, but a God of our daily lives. Faith in God is not unveiled in fantastic incidents, but in the ordinary course of our daily existence. We seek God and we find him in every moment of our being, and we see the guiding hand of God in every ordinary event. And we believe that everything that God does with us is for our good.

But if Abraham is the prototype of our faith in our Father in Heaven, Isaac becomes the symbol of our readiness to be sacrificed for the faith. The scroll of the martyrology of the Jews for the sanctification of the name, as well as that which is recorded concerning the self-

sacrifice of the Jewish-Christian believers, is already symbolized in the act of Isaac upon the altar. Subsequent Jewish tradition ascribes to Isaac a much larger role in this incident than does the Bible narrative. Not only did Isaac know that his father was about to offer him as a sacrifice, but he helped his father in the preparations with a joyous heart. According to the Jewish tradition Isaac uttered a benediction on that occasion:-“Blessed be the Lord God who has chosen me on this day to be offered up as a burnt sacrifice to him.”

“When Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac,” the later Jewish legend goes on to tell us, “Isaac said, Father, bind my hands and feet, for the soul is impudent, and when I will see the knife I will move, and thereby pollute the sacrifice. I beg thee, therefore, bind me, so that I may not have a scar on me when I am being sacrificed.” (For it was held that a creature with a scar was unfit for sacrifice.) “Thereupon Abraham bound Isaac, his son.”

In and through Isaac all of us, all the “seed of Israel,” all those who have received the inheritance of the flesh or spirit, have lain upon the altar, ready to be sacrificed to God. In and through this act our patriarch Isaac has ennobled man the worm and lifted him to the status of a child of God.

The spot upon which the binding of Isaac took place became the holiest in Israel—the Holy of Holies in the Temple.

Later legends connected the sacrifice of Isaac with the Messiah. The blast of the ram’s horn is a reminder of the sacrifice; and the blast of the ram’s horn will announce the coming of the Messiah.

It is not my purpose in this work to justify or to describe the lives of the patriarchs as models for ourselves and to measure their acts with our measure. It is obviously impossible for us to accept with enthusiasm certain of the incidents in their record. Very obviously, according to our accepted code of gentlemanly honor, it is impermissible for one to disown one's wife toward a friend, in order to derive some profit from the deception, or even in order to save one's own life. And similarly it is not permissible to win the blessing of the older son by fooling an old, blind father. It is true that later generations found it necessary to put another construction on the second incident; and in its efforts to justify the incident the legend even draws God into the conspiracy of Rebeccah and Jacob; but with all of this, it is impossible to reconcile the act with the moral code of modern man. Nor am I concerned here with accusation, any more than with justification. What is written here has but one purpose—to direct the attention to the first traces of a religion which proceeds from authority, a religion which becomes the controlling element in the lives and acts of the first religious men, and manifests itself in the life of a family or tribe belonging to a world of primitive passions and primitive idol-worship. The belief in the *Ehad* (the one and only God) is the moving force in all the daily acts of the patriarchs, and becomes the creator of an ethical life in a single family; it becomes the moving force for an entire group, and then spreads out to become, via the Christian faith, the same for the world of the nations which created our civilization, good or bad.

What is most typical of faith by authority is not its static nature but its mobility and its capacity for development. It is not closed off in ripeness by the ideal character which is attributed to the gods in Greek mythology. On the contrary, religion via authority is a living, flowing stream, which moves forever toward moral improvement. Authority has not been given once and for all in all the history of the creation of man; authority is renewed in every generation. "Jephthah was righteous in his generation, as Samuel was in his," we are told by the tradition. God himself is changeless, but the radiations which he sends out as authority change man, and develop him upward from level to level of moral being. This authority is like a funnel through which the inspiration of divinity is poured into human nature; authority purifies the character of man by awakening in him a profounder conception of human obligation, born of his bond with divinity.

The Bible is not an anthology of songs, like the Iliad or the Odyssey, which celebrate the myths and heroes of a nation, making them the carriers of the nation's ideal. The Bible is, primarily and above all, a code of laws and commands which have been given by God for the regulation of men's relations to him and to each other. Let the Bible critics divide the Bible as they will, into the "Elohists" and the "Jahvists," into the "books of God" and the "books of priests"; it still remains a unity in its effect—at first a family chronicle, later a code for a group.

The prophetic-heroic vision of a universal God and a universal Messiah is the substance of the author's in-

tention, and it is devoid of any tendency to set up the patriarchs as model heroes for the Jews. The model is represented by the laws of God, given through Moses. They provide the measure which is applied to all values—and even the patriarchs are not excluded. The patriarchs were mortal men, like all others. In their function they were the funnel through which the idea of monotheism was poured from the beginning until the declaration of the message by the prophets; they are the carriers of the promises and benedictions of God, because they are the first discoverers of him, and the first covenanters. It was the purpose of the author of the Bible to put on record the separateness and precedence of this family bond with God, with all the obligations and blessings that it implied, and to make of it as it were a legal deed to the descendants of the patriarchs. In so doing, the author did not shrink from uncovering uncomfortable family secrets, as long as he fulfilled his purpose. Isaac was not Abimelech's son, for all that his mother had been received into the court of the Phoenician king, but the direct descendant of Abraham; it was to Jacob, not to Esau, that the inheritance of the clan and family descended, even though Esau was the older. This was put into effect by various deceptions, with the conspiratorial co-operation of the family God, who had from the very first been concerned that the spiritual heritage be made to flow through the right channels to the future children of Israel.

And yet the patriarch Jacob stands before us as an exemplar, with the piety of his life, with his humility and, above all, with his poor, simple humanity.

Neither as a god of the mythologies, nor as a king and great lord, like his grandfather Abraham, nor even as the rightful heir, like his father Isaac, Jacob stands before us as a simple human being beset with human weaknesses. I imagine that Jacob was the first Jew to say the psalms; they were written specially for him, that he might, in them, pour out his broken heart to God, for the spirit of Jacob is specifically that of a psalmist.

No steward at the head of a caravan of camels laden with rich gifts went before Jacob to seek out for him a wife of his own clan, as had been the case with Isaac his father. Equipped with nothing more than his shepherd's crook and the blessing of the first-born bestowed on him by his father, Jacob sets out alone for his mother's family to start life for himself. Night overtakes him on the road, and he pillows his head on a stone. Between dark and dawn there comes to him the vision of the angels on a ladder. The God of his father appears to him and renews the promise which he gave to his father and his grandfather. The heritage of the authority passes down by the direct line, and the covenant of Abraham is valid for his children. The spot upon which the vision came to Jacob is, according to later tradition, the very one upon which Isaac was bound for the sacrifice and which in the fullness of time was to become the holiest spot on earth, where God made His dwelling place. The place is "fearful." Jacob erects there an altar, pours a little oil on it, and makes a vow: "If God will be with me and will keep me in my ways, and will give me bread to eat and a mantle to clothe myself with...."

Whatever he possessed in later years he did not, like his father Isaac, inherit; he acquired it by the labor of his hands. "In the day the heat consumed me, and in the night the cold." The romance of his love for Rachel becomes for later generations the symbol of all that is highest and purest in human love. He is swindled by a cunning and avaricious father-in-law; he serves fourteen years for his two wives; seven years more he serves for the possession of his store of sheep and cattle, which he acquires from his cunning father-in-law through the exercise of his ingenuity. He begets children, and with them come the sorrows of fatherhood. He displays a common human weakness in being bound more closely to the children borne him by his most beloved wife. The others are provoked to jealousy. The altogether human, day-to-day story unfolds and moves on until the tribes are brought into Egypt.

Jacob's life is not the life of a hero; it is my life and yours. That is why it is so close to us. It is also the life of one who already stands completely under the sign of the authority of God. Faith in its highest form, that of the providential guidance of the individual, is the outstanding element in that life. Therefore it is a life filled with humility, with human weakness, with the heart-break of the psalmist. God dominates his life not by heroism (except for the wrestling with the angel there is no touch of heroism in his acts), but by piety, by the purity of love and the struggle with human weakness.

We may say that divinity manifested itself through the acts of Abraham in faith; but by the sacrificial act of Isaac the life of Jacob became the first that was ever

formed completely under the sign of the authority of God.

God and faith became, in Jacob, our flesh and blood. He is the guardian and guarantor of our continuance, the breath of our life. Through the purity of Jacob our earth was lifted to the level of heaven, our lives to the level of men-gods.

Jacob closes the period of the patriarchs. In him his children had a completed pattern of life under the authority of God. Faith in a monotheistic God, which sets the boundaries between good and evil, became the inheritance of his blood. Armed with this inheritance of the faith his offspring went down to Egypt to begin the four centuries of suffering and purification concerning which God had already forewarned Abraham on the day of the making of the covenant.

Chapter Six

THE TRANSMISSION OF THE AUTHORITY TO THE JEWS

With seventy souls, the Jewish tradition tells us, Jacob went down to Egypt; six hundred thousand was the number of descendants who went forth from Egypt. The time which had elapsed was, according to the tradition, four hundred years.

The soil of Egypt, which has conserved in the desert safe the records of ancient days, is extremely niggardly, if not completely barren, in reference to the sojourn of the Jews in Egypt; and of Moses there is no mention at all. Egyptologists believe, however, that somewhere in the lap of the wilderness there still lie, undiscovered, the documentary proof of the exodus. The first reports outside of the Bible are of a much later date and come to us from Greek and Syrian sources. But these sources are not particularly reliable. All the accounts are highly colored by a spirit of hostility to the Jews. Throughout the centuries the Greek "accounts" have served to feed the imagination of enemies of the Jews. Even so, our knowledge of them is derived principally from the Jewish apologists of the first century, such as Josephus and Philo.

Both of these are much concerned with the Alex-

andrian Greek anti-Semitism of their day. In particular they retort upon the scurrilities of one Apion, who, on the ostensible basis of early sources, gave a very different account of the exodus from that which is found in the Bible. According to Apion the departure of the Jews did not take place as a consequence of the will of God expressed through Moses; on the contrary, it was the Egyptians, who, of their own choice, drove out the Jews for religious reasons; and according to other accounts the Jews were driven out because they were "lepers, blind and lame." There is also a variant on the religious story, according to which a new faith arose among the Egyptians, so that many of them seceded from the cult of the country, joined themselves to the nomads who had come originally from Palestine, and accompanied them back thither. However, the followers of the new religious movement, together with their foreign allies, are also described as "unclean and leprous."

But the actual existence of Moses does not need the documentary corroboration of the Egyptologists. Moses influences our lives even to this day, and that not only among the Jews who have accepted the Mosaic faith, but among Christians who live according to the Christian faith. Had there been no Moses, there would have been no Judaism, and without a Judaism there would have been no Christianity. It is ludicrous to wait for the documentary proof of the existence of one who, as a purely "imaginary" figure, works in countless ways upon our daily acts. Moses is an essential factor in our moral being, as the substance of the air is an essential factor in

our physical being. The air, too, is invisible in the ordinary sense, though it can be weighed, compressed, and liquefied.

I find it utterly impossible to regard the Greek and Syrian "accounts" which describe the Jews in Egypt as "lame and blind," or even as "unclean and leprous," as anything but malevolently inspired inventions and wretched calumnies. What lingers in them is the trace of the existence of an enslaved Jewish mass, reduced by the lash of Pharaonic oppression to the level of dumb brutes. Our own day furnishes a parallel which is in the nature of a proof. Should the war end with a victory of the totalitarian powers—which God forbid—half of Europe will be reduced to that same condition. Indeed, the actual condition of slavery under which the Jews lived in Egypt testifies to the element of reliability in those distorted accounts which date from the period of Alexander the Great and the Egyptian Ptolemies. The sculptures and reliefs of ancient Assyrian and Egyptian times furnish us with a first-hand picture of what slave life must have been like in those countries. We see long chains of naked human beings tugging at vast rocks or at the enormous columns of royal images, while over them curls the lash of the overseer. The Biblical account condenses the martyrology of our forefathers in Egypt into a single, pregnant phrase: "And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage." "There is no straw given unto thy servants," the Jewish elders said plaintively to Pharaoh, "and they say to us, Make brick." A later tradition tells that instead of the straw needed to bind the bricks and structures, the Egyptians built the

children of the Jews into the walls. Whoever has stood before those ghastly slave-memorials, the pyramids of Ramses, which spring out of the desert, must have felt that the hewn rocks were fastened to each other not with mortar, but with human sweat and blood which still cries out from the joints.

To the mass of the "blind and lame and leprous" who had been enslaved for centuries, God sent a liberator, Moses. It would seem that among the Jews of Egypt there had survived—as was the case in later times—an ancient memory of their origin, echoes of legends of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The divine promise that they would be liberated must have worked in them much as the expectation of the Messiah worked in other generations, and the Jewish tradition does in fact fasten upon Moses the role of the first Messiah; it gave them the endurance to survive those miserable days. The bond with the God of the Hebrews had become weakened, but it could not be utterly destroyed, even by a torture which lasted for centuries; it persisted, and became the bridge over which the Jews passed from the abjectness of slavery to the freedom of a nomad people. Yoked to the rocks, or standing on the scaffolds and passing the bricks to each other—as they are shown on the ancient reliefs—they must have whispered now and again of certain legends, traditions, and memories—something concerning a forefather called Abraham, and a son called Isaac who was brought to the sacrifice, and one called Jacob to whom the promise of fulfillment was repeated. The weak flame which was never extinguished, the vague recollection of that authority which they had brought

down to Egypt, rescued them from a decline into utter brutishness; and when the liberator appeared, the flame reawakened and leapt upward. To that liberator they gave, according to the Jewish tradition, the name of Messiah—the first appearance of the Messianic idea among the Jews.

It cannot have been otherwise, for without such obstinacy of recollection it would be incomprehensible that after four centuries of continuous brutalization an enslaved tribe should still be able to summon the moral energy which is needed to obey a call to liberation.

The Bible tells us that Moses demanded of Pharaoh the liberation of the Jews in the name of the God of Israel, giving as his ostensible reason that the Jews needed to go on a three-day journey into the wilderness in order to make sacrifice to "our God." The incident of the thorn bush which burned and was not consumed stood under the sign of the covenant: "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob." The "elders of Israel," whom Moses assembled to transmit God's command to them, were those Jews in whom the recollection of the divine authority under which they still had their being was the liveliest. A later legend tells us of the Jews of Egypt that, though they were enslaved, they lived in piety, observed the laws of purity, avoided the dissoluteness of the Egyptians, and even practiced certain commandments which they had inherited from the patriarch. Thus, there was kept alive in the Egyptian slaves the memory of their high origin, which prevented their utter spiritual down-going. Among the practices were some at least of the seven command-

ments of the sons of Noah, which were so old that, according to the Jewish tradition, even Adam knew of them: such as, for instance, the prohibition of murder, the prohibition against cutting and eating the flesh of the living animal, the prohibition against sexual congress with the closer members of one's family. They must have had, too, an idea of the Sabbath, though it is hard to see how they could have observed it. But the tradition of it was there. No doubt the pure lives of the slaves must have made some impression on certain of the Egyptians. Just as the life of the Jews in the Greek cities, at a later date, so impressed the gentiles that many of them came to the synagogues in search of God, so in Egypt the purity of the Jewish way must have attracted certain of the Egyptians, who neglected their own gods and turned to the Jews; so that both these Egyptians and the Jews are lumped together in the Greek sources as "unclean and leprous."

It may very well be, too, that these Egyptians constituted the "rabble" which later was the cause of so much tribulation to Moses.

Moses leads the slave mass forth from Egypt amidst miracles and portents; God divides the Red Sea for them; He lets them wander through the wilderness and brings them to the foot of a mountain. Then Moses disappears for forty days and forty nights on the mountain top. A cloud covers the mountain, and in the midst of the cloud are thunder and lightning, and a divine voice. Moses emerges from the flames bearing the tablets with the ten commandments—he brings down the authority from God to the children of Israel.

Now it is not a covenant with God, such as Abraham their forefather made with him, a pact founded on mutual agreement and understanding; it is not the promise which God gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But in the name of that covenant, and in the name of the promise, Moses brings down from heaven the laws and commandments which shall regulate the lives of the Jews in every minutest detail—so that they may become a peculiar people, a holy people, carrying the yoke of the kingdom of heaven. Willy-nilly, they must accept the laws—they are compelled to the acceptance. God lifted up Mount Sinai like an arch above the encampment of the Jews, saying: “If you refuse my laws, I will crush you beneath this mountain.” So the tradition tells us, adding that all the souls of all the generations were present at the compulsion, “those that were already born and those which were yet to be born,” and all of them signified their acceptance in the cry: “We will do and we will obey.” This was more than a collective obligation; it was ratified by each individual as such. Just as every individual in Israel enjoys the separate, personal, providential guardianship of God, so every Jewish individual stands personally under the law. Nor is there any liberation from this obligation, unless it be through the medium of another authority, a second one, proceeding from God to replace the first one.

I do not intend to pass in review the entire early history of the Jewish people. My purpose is to outline the development of the mandated faith, beginning with the acceptance of the mandate as a way of life and as the constitution which regulates the relations of a group

to the divinity and its human environment. It will not be necessary to pause on the details of that development, which are more or less familiar to everyone; and I have therefore chosen a number of stages and incidents which seem to me aptest to illumine the results which flowed from the acceptance of the authority.

The mandate or authority was given by the one highest source; the laws were set; the contract with the peculiar people was sealed. What happened then? The generation of the living which entered into the contract was incapable of carrying it out. The habit of slavery was strong in it, and it longed for the fleshpots of Egypt. Moses leads the people forty years through the wilderness, till the first generation disappears in its sands. With it passes the leader of that generation, Moses himself; and it is a second generation which the trusted assistant of Moses leads into the promised land, there to begin the life under the authority.

But the God of their vision is still the God of the tribe, the God of Israel. The wealth of the earth is in His hand for distribution. Those who live under the authority shall be given "length of days"; as to those who rebel against the authority, "their years shall be cut short." But step by step, catching at a soul here and there, the faith develops under the authority from the vision of a tribal God to that of a universal God. In his hand there is more than "length of days." There is eternity, there is the life of the other world, and there is the Messiah who will come to change the order of the world.

For the peculiar greatness of faith under the authority

lies in this: that the authority is an eternal one. Not given once only but, as we have already pointed out, perpetually renewed. God reveals his will through the prophets whom he sends to the children of men. In the beginning their prophetic utterances are for Israel alone; thereafter, for the whole world. The authority is like a living well of ever-brimming water.

Israel does not sustain the obligation he has assumed. Except in short intervals he never ceased to serve at the altars of strange gods and to offer them sacrifice. He is drawn to the customs of other peoples; he longs to become like them and to throw off the yoke which he assumed with the acceptance of the authority. He rebels against it repeatedly—and God holds him down like a bound calf upon the true altar. Israel becomes the eternal burnt offering. In him is mirrored the will of God, who compels him to keep to the way which He has ordained for him, sending out the expression of His will again and again through the Prophets.

Now who are these Prophets who come in the name of the authority? Their prophetic function is not an inheritance from father to son. God takes away the prophecy from the priest Eli and bestows it on little Samuel. In almost every instance the prophecy descends on the elected ones like a storm, seizes them by the hair of their heads and compels them to confront the mighty of the earth and to declare God's will to them. In almost every instance they struggle against the divine commission, but they struggle in vain. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou didst issue from thy swaddling clothes I sanctified thee a prophet unto the

nations," says God to Jeremiah. "And if I said to myself, I will not mention him any more, neither will I speak in his name, then my heart became like a burning fire."

They are called away from the feeding of the flocks to testify, to stand before kings and utter the word of God: not the word of the priests, and not even the word of Israel, but the word of God. Nearly all of them reject the sacrifices: "Your sacrifices are an abomination unto me." Some of them call the Temple a den of murderers, and speak against the national interests of the people. Judah and Israel wish to reunite, but the Prophet is opposed. There are Prophets who are persecuted, beaten and humiliated; they retire to the wilderness, they eat wild honey, they are fed by the ravens, or by poor widows. Their strength is not, in the main, the strength of miracles; only now and again does a Prophet fortify his words with a miraculous deed. Their task is always one, and one only, to pursue the truth—but not the truth of a narrow, religious sect; they pursue justice, but not the justice of a national egotism. Absolute truth and absolute justice, deriving from a universal God and applying to all mankind—these are their objectives.

The Prophets were neither Delphic oracles, such as the Greeks sought practical counsel from, nor the *Urim* and *Thummim* of the priesthood, kept in the Tabernacle in the days of the Kingdom, for the practical guidance of Kings in war and peace. The Prophets were admonishers, reminding Israel of his obligation under the mandated law. God did not wait for the people to come to Him; instead—and this is characteristic of mandated

religion—He went out to His people, maintaining perpetual contact with it by the renewal of authority to Prophet after Prophet. Thus God cannot become static, petrified in His own dogma; for He is more than the creator of man; He is the constant molder of his character, his form, and his personality. The Jews become the light which God lifts up to the peoples. They must be sanctified—there is no escape from it. And if they seek to escape, an eternal exhortation is dinned into their ears by the Prophets, terrible pictures of the future are held up to them, and the dread of God is poured into their hearts.

But the Prophets are mighty in more than their power to terrify. In the day of disaster and wretchedness they will not let the people fall. They can illumine the future with the brilliant promise just as they can darken it with horror; they hold out the prospect of the Messianic promise for the pious and the great liberation for the just. And when the sword lay on the throat of the people, it was the Prophet who brought consolation, hope, courage, and trust in God, the redeemer.

Out of their mouths, mandated to speak in the name of the authority, came that which enabled us to utter the supreme hope of mankind, a universal salvation for a universal world, in the name of a universal God.

Thus Judaism, acting through the authority, brought three blessings to the world:

- a) The belief in a monotheistic God;
- b) Man's part in the divinity, assured by the authority;
- c) The vision of a universal redeemer who will come

to free all men, bring a higher moral order into the world, and establish peace not only among the nations which accept God and His faith, but even in the processes of nature.

Faith in a one God implies obligation to a pure life. The concepts of "good" and "evil" are fixed and regulated by the will of God, Who has incorporated Himself in laws and virtues as an example to us. We find Him, then, in utterances like the following: "As God is merciful, so shall ye be merciful"; "As God is just, so shall ye be just"; "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—which is the substance of the ethical life. We find Him in the expression of the longing "that all the nations shall make a covenant to serve God with all their hearts"—that is, the longing to expand the kingdom of God. "And spread over us the tabernacle of peace." The three virtues are the foundations of the Jewish faith. If monotheism is the beginning of faith, the Messianic idea becomes its fulfillment. The one is implied by the other; or we may say that monotheism and the Messianic idea, which is the Kingdom of God, are one and the same thing.

The ideal of the Messiah passed beyond the hope in a dynastic monarch who was to liberate the Jews alone; strengthened in the fire of Jewish suffering, borne on the wings of a great hope, formed in the Jewish spirit, the Messiah grew into a universal deliverer for all mankind and for the earth itself. Not only will he beat the swords of men into ploughshares, and cause the lion and the lamb to lie down together—he will change the order of the world. The final expansion of the Jewish

hope, which is the Messianic idea, resembles the beginning of the Jewish faith, in that both have passed beyond the bounds of factual being. The resurrection, which comes with the Messianic idea, is, like the awaiting of the Messiah himself, one of the chief articles of the Jewish faith. And in turn, the awaiting of the Messiah—"I wait for his coming every day"—is as essential as the belief in God or in the commandments of the Torah.

The Jewish Messianic idea threw aside all the limitations which the poverty of our life might have imposed on it; our sufferings inspired the fantasy which created it, without endowing it with any of their forms. In it the warm Jewish spirit found a fruitful field of creation. What pain had left empty, the Messianic idea filled up with joy, what humiliation had warped the Messianic idea straightened out with the ultimate truth. It clothed our nakedness in a royal robe, and the robe was wide enough to cover all of us.

Only such an ideal, embodying the ultimate hope of mankind, made it worth our while to endure on the long road of our martyrdom. Its realization beckoned to our martyrs when they ascended the scaffold and made lighter the yoke of every Jew.

The one, single, incomprehensible, living God; the pure ethical life to which faith in Him obligates us; the universal, all-human, ultimate liberation in a Messiah: these were the three benedictions which Judaism bestowed on mankind. For the privilege of this act the Jewish people has paid the most heroic price to be found in the records of mankind.

For it may be that if Judaism had confined these

benedictions to Jews alone, the Jews would not have found the strength to endure, and the price which the world exacted could be paid only out of those resources which were created by the Jewish faith in a universal Messianic liberation.

Chapter Seven

THE WEAVING OF THE ROBE OF THE MESSIAH

The Messianic ideal which the second Isaiah shadowed forth in Babylon, the ideal which the psalms celebrate and which Daniel glimpsed in his vision of the Ancient of Days, could not be considered as fulfilled in the return of the Jews to Palestine through Ezra and Nehemiah. The return did not take place in the manner forecast by the Prophets; for in the prophecies concerning the Messiah the Jewish people is set at the center of the redemption. The nations would indeed "stream to the mount of God," but "God's mountain shall be exalted above the hills." The actual return did not have upon it any of the marks of the redemption. It took place under the authority and protection of Cyrus. The raising of the walls of Jerusalem was carried out under the most difficult conditions. "They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon." The liberation did not bring the reward for carrying the yoke of a life under the authority and for the persecution which it entailed. Nations which stood outside the authority of

the faith—Babylon, Persia, Greece—set their foot on the neck of Israel.

The weaving of the Messianic ideal therefore continued. Its theme deepened. Suffering is not the sign of God's rejection; it is, on the contrary, the sign of God's election. "Those whom he loveth he chastiseth." The true reward for suffering is made not on this earth, but upon another. The coming of the Messiah will mean not only the liberation of the Jews alone, but the end of the world. The resurrection, the great torture, the great day of judgment, the eternal Sabbath, the spreading out of the "tabernacle of peace"—such are now the motifs of the theme. Those sufferings did not exempt even the Messiah. There grows up in the fantasy of the Jewish people a frightful picture of the agonies which must precede the redemption. Even God is made a partner in the pain of Israel. When He remembers His children who suffer among the nations of the world, two tears roll from His eyes and fall into the Great Sea, and the sound of their fall is heard from end to end of the world.

The resurrection, which is mentioned in Ezekiel only in the form of a vision—the withered bones which are clothed with flesh—takes on a more palpable reality in Daniel: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Daniel 12:2.) Soon the belief in the resurrection passes into one of the eighteen benedictions which every Jew must recite in his daily prayer, and is later incorporated by Maimonides in the thirteen articles of the faith.

A Messiah who will mount the clouds of heaven as the "Ancient of Days," who will sit down to the judgment and awaken the dead, some to everlasting pain and some to everlasting shame—such a Messiah could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be identified with the return to Zion of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel. For these were not only regarded as no Messiahs; even the name of Prophet was withheld from them. With Ezra begins the list of the scribes—the learned ones. Ezra is accepted as a religious revivalist, a sort of Calvin. The gift of prophecy is withdrawn from the Jews. Only here and there a man or woman dares to entertain visions, but none of these later visionaries dares to speak in his or her own name; and to give their revelations standing they masquerade under ancient firm-names—the mystic Enoch of the first generation, King Solomon, Moses, the Hasmoneans: they even have recourse to the names of the Greek Sibyls. The only one who dared to present himself under his own firm-name is ben Sira; he, however, is not a Prophet, and utters no prophecy, as the others claim to do; he contents himself with wise and penetrating aphorisms. None of them is admitted to the canon. Very probably there were a great many more of them than we know of today, for it is hardly to be believed that throughout this long stretch of time—from the last of the accepted Prophets until the first Rabbis of the Mishnah, there should have been among the Jews so little of the divine inspiration which fills the time of the first Temple and the brief interlude of the Babylonian exile.

There was not a single moment in the period of the

second Temple concerning which the Jews could say that now they beheld the fulfillment of the redemption through the Messianic ideal which they had brought back with them from Babylon.

The period of the first Temple was illumined by the glory of David and Solomon, and with those names the Jews connected the hopes which were intertwined with the Messianic ideal. On David's brow they placed the crown which in later ages they hammered out for the Messiah; the certification of the Messiah was—the line of his descent from David. But throughout the whole period of the second Temple there was not one among the Jewish rulers who even for a brief, illusory period could assume in the eyes of his countrymen the Messianic role. For the ideal had by this time taken on such spiritual heroism that the robe of the Messiah could sit only on some metaphysical, mystic personality.

The Jewish genius renounced any attempt at the conquest of the material riches of the earth, and focussed its ambition on other objectives. Its forces were deployed not on the field of battle but on the fields of heaven. Its dream was to bring heaven down upon earth, to destroy the boundaries which men had erected between each other, and to do this not with a sword of steel but with the sword of the spirit. To this end the Jew made heroic preparations. The range of his spiritual ambition was not narrower than the limits of mankind, and the objective was nothing less than the transformation of man's desire from earthly to divine purposes. The physical area which the Jew needed for the conduct of his mighty campaign was exiguous. To him it was all

one who reigned over his body, as long as his soul was free to weave its dream, and to live according to the mandated faith, which he drew about him like a fence to keep him from the temptations of the false way of life.

Brief, fierce, and lightning-like is the episode of the Maccabaean revolt, the campaign of the father and sons. They are remembered with gratitude in the records of the Jews for the heroic note they sounded, echoing down through many centuries to encourage the Jewish people to this day. But the spark of divinity which accompanied the struggle of the Hasmoneans, and which glowed only as long as the inspiration was the desire for spiritual independence, was soon extinguished. Mattathias, the father, and Judas Maccabeus, the son, were sanctified in the memory of the people because they had fought for independence and for the assurance to the Jews of the right to live under their own tradition in accordance with the authority. It is quite remarkable that the biography of the leaders, as given in the Books of the Maccabees, is not included in the Holy Writ. In the Talmud the Hasmonean incident finds mention only to the extent of the wonder which occurred in the Temple, when the little cruse of oil served to keep the candelabrum alight till a fresh supply of ritually pure fuel was obtained. In the Jewish ritual the victory of the Maccabeans is celebrated only for the sake of the miraculous cruse of oil! Simon, the last of the Maccabean brothers, who was really successful in obtaining—through diplomatic and also through military means—the independence for which his father and brothers had fought,

occupies no special place in Jewish history. He does not even rank with his father Mattathias or his brother Judah. He becomes the High Priest, with the consent of the "Great Synagogue." The High Priesthood is delivered to his posterity as a dynastic inheritance "for ever—that is, until there will arise an accepted Prophet." Which is to say that neither Simon, nor any of his brothers, nor any of their descendants, was regarded as falling within the classification of prophecy or Messiahship. The prophet was yet to come who would reveal the identity of the Messiah.

The expansion of the Jewish kingdom, and the affirmation of the Jewish faith, owed more to Hyrkanos the first, grandson of Mattathias, and to Jannai, son of Hyrkanos, than to Mattathias himself and to his sons. But a bitter spirit of opposition arose among the learned Jews against Hyrkanos and Jannai, particularly against the latter. Jannai expanded the borders of the Kingdom till they almost coincided with the conquests of David and Solomon. He acquired more territory than all the original Hasmoneans; he crossed the Jordan; he compelled the peoples who lived among the Jews, the Edomites and the Moabites, to subscribe to the Jewish faith. But the Rabbis and the scholars among the Jews were so profoundly opposed to such conquests that a revolt occurred—the revolt of the Pharisees. Once, during the Festival of Booths, when the King appeared in the Temple, the people pelted him with citrons; and when he returned defeated from a war with the King of Arabia, the Pharisees not only rejoiced, but rose against him in a rebellion which cost not less than fifty thousand lives.

The Jewish genius could perceive no purpose in the acquisition of earthly goods, in the expansion of Israel's boundaries, in the compulsory conversion of alien peoples. Its eyes were fixed on other values, incommensurate with these; not compulsion with steel but persuasion with the spirit was its dream.

The people had chosen rightly, as soon became evident. The children of King Jannai, descendants of the Hasmoneans, degenerated into base little Asiatic chieftains, who could not agree among themselves as to the division of the heritage, the Kingdom and the Priesthood. They intrigued against each other, employed the vilest means, did not shrink from fratricide and civil war, and finally called in the wolf to guard the sheep—called in the lord of Edom (Rome) to make order in the house of Israel, which Pompey did after his fashion, with fire and sword, climaxing his brutality by desecrating the sanctuary and breaking into the Holy of Holies.

The fire of God, which the first Hasmoneans had kindled on the mount of Zion, was extinguished. Upon the ashes, in the place where once the throne of David had stood, and where the Messiah was one day to reign, was now erected the throne of a descendant of the people which Jannai had converted with the sword—Herod the First, Herod the Great.

With all his cruelties, with all his wild schemes, and with all his frightful exactions, Herod did much for the independence of the Jewish people; he did much, also, for the extension of the frontiers and for the conquest of foreign markets. He adorned the cities with magnificent buildings and introduced new branches of com-

merce and industry. On the whole he did his best in trying circumstances. With infinite wiliness he guided his country through the complications of the Roman civil war which marked the transition from the Republic to the Empire; he showed considerable diplomatic skill in riding out the storm, aligning himself at the right moment with the rising force in Rome and finding himself ultimately on the side of the victor. He came to the help of Caesar when the latter was in great danger, and Caesar did not forget; he rewarded Herod with provinces and remained his friend for life. Herod even knew how to handle Cleopatra of Egypt, the queen who, like a cunning harlot, never for a moment lost sight of her material interests, and who, while she fondled in her lap the head of a Caesar or an Antony, did not forget to ask for returns in the shape of peoples and provinces. But Herod also knew how to win, later on, the steadfast friendship of the Emperor Augustus, who became the protector of the Jews; it was Augustus who introduced into the Roman code the provision which became a tradition with the entire Julian line—the right of the Jews to live according to their own laws and customs. Herod created friends for the Jews among the peoples of Asia Minor and Greece; and we may surmise that the magnificent presents he distributed, the superb arenas and temples and colonnades he erected in the Greek cities, had as their purpose the creation of goodwill for the Jews and the promotion of commerce.

Had Herod been the King of any other people of antiquity, or for that matter of modern times, the methods which he used for the attainment of his objects

would have been forgiven and forgotten; his name would be mentioned with pride as the “Increaser of the State” and its material possessions. But with all his success and his triumphs he has remained, among the Jews, a ghastly portent, and his name was mentioned not with pride but with grinding of teeth. His memory is pilloried for ever in the name of “the Edomite”; and when his son Archilaus ascended the throne after him, the Jews rose in revolt, and continued so until they sent a deputation to Rome, asking for the suppression of the Jewish Kingdom and the Edomite dynasty, preferring the direct dominion of Rome and the rule of a Procurator. They freely surrendered their physical independence when it conflicted with their spiritual freedom.

Certainly we shall not deny that a religion based on authority carried with it the danger of a theocracy, which was capable of polluting its original mandate, leaving upon it the stains of the blood and tears of generations. The lowest level of such debasement was reached in the time of the Second Temple by the theocracy of the High Priests. They transformed the mandate, which they “acquired” by usurpation, by purchase from the Roman authorities, by intrigues and base stratagems, into a milch cow. This was neither the first nor the last time in the history of religion that schemers and opportunists debased the divine mandate to the level of a tax-collector’s office. We shall have more to say on this subject in the sequel. But as often as the mandate of faith devolved into the hands of wicked men, the spirit of God awakened in prophets and religious revolutionaries, who fought for restoration of the sacred trust to its

rightful representatives. In the period in question, then, there arose the Tanaim, the Rabbis, the "Pharisees"—those profoundly misunderstood and misrepresented religious teachers whom modern research and scholarship is at last rehabilitating and restoring to the place of honor which is properly theirs. They performed, for the period of the Second Temple, the function which the Prophets performed in the period of the first. True, they were not moved by the holy spirit in the same manner as the Prophets, nor did they speak at the direct instance of the authority; but, as against this, they did make of the authority a way of life for the people, adapting the laws and commandments to the daily needs of the masses. From the beginning of this period, which dates back to Simon the Just, who was a contemporary of Alexander the Great, they constituted a second authority in the Council of the Great Synagogue, challenging the false claim to the authority which was put forward by the Kingship and the High Priesthood. Thus, while the "legitimate" authority was actually confined to political leadership, the true authority manifested itself in the spiritual ascendancy which the teachers established over the masses. Like the Prophets, these later teachers were concerned exclusively with the spiritual destiny of Israel. They labored to maintain the Jewish people in its peculiar and separate purity. It is true that they may sometimes have overdone it, that the fences and prohibitions which they drew about the life of the plain man sometimes threatened to asphyxiate him. And yet, if the Jewish people did endure, a tiny island in the ocean of idol worship, sensuality, dissoluteness, and cruelty

which inundated the Hellenic world, the credit belongs to the “hated” Rabbis. They guarded the Jewish people as if it were the vessel containing the lore of God in a turbulent world of uncleanness and moral savagery. Because this was the picture they had in mind, they were zealous and overzealous in keeping the contents of the holy vial from contamination, and they were always prepared to compromise their physical independence for the sake of their moral freedom.

They were the ones who rose against King Jannai when he went forth to foreign conquest and with the power of the sword brought alien peoples into the fold of the faith. They organized the first opposition to the Sadducean Kings and High Priests. They suffered persecution exactly like the Prophets before them and the martyrs of the faith after them. In the dark days of Herod’s dominion they offered up their lives to shield the flame of Israel’s spiritual life. They were the ones who ignored the clamor of a pitifully ambitious nationalism and preferred the rule of a Roman procurator to the degrading tyranny of a “native” king. And they, again, were the ones who gave up the battle against Rome and surrendered the Temple, a free Jerusalem, and an independent Palestine, for the right to establish a religious academy, in which they were to create that portable spiritual treasure which the Jews could carry with them into the exile.

They deepened the channels of faith, purified Judaism, ennobled the people, and created new ethical and moral values. This they did not only by interpreting and adapting the law, so as to render it viable, but by the

introduction of universal concepts and by transferring the emphasis of faith to the single sentence, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Such was the outlook of Hillel, the greatest authority in Talmudic Judaism. They enriched the annals of Jewry with an extraordinary gallery of intellectual giants and heroic martyrs, whose influence pulses in the life of the Jews till this day: a Hillel, a Gamaliel, a Johanaan ben Zaccai, an Akiba, a Simon ben Jochai. They carried on a continuous war against the royal and priestly tyrants, undermined their standing and destroyed their authority; they fought the monopolies established by the High Priests, and denounced them for the persecutions which they practiced, the murders they committed. Their education of the people was based on a continuity of contact with divinity by way of the laws. They prepared the Jewish people for spiritual survival in the Diaspora by detaching the authority from the Temple, by liberating the law from the sacrificial offering—this in the teeth of the priestly opposition which sprang from an opposed interest—and by emphasizing the ethical law in daily conduct. Prayer takes the place of sacrifice; the Shekhinah—the Divine Presence—is wherever there are Jews. "God desires only the goodness of the heart." "That which you would not have done unto you, do not do unto your neighbor." These become the cornerstones of the law. But the particular distinction and achievement of the Pharisees lay in the fact that they directed the energies of the Jewish people into the one field where the Jewish genius could bring forth its richest fruit—the spiritual and religious field. In so doing they made it

possible for the Jews to prepare their greatest gift to mankind—the idea of a universal Messiah.

Even in the shadow of the Temple, with its piles of marble and its gates of gold, the Jewish people dreamed the dream of the Messiah, and waited for his coming from day to day, as they do still. They were penetrated then, as they are even now, with the vision of a liberator who would not merely improve the material lot of man, but would bring with him the waters of life for a prostrate and parching world.

An early legend concerning the King Messiah pictures him as a beggar in chains, seated at one of the gates of Rome. But under his beggar's rags he wears a garment of heavenly luster which puts to shame the brightness of the sun. In one hand he holds the trumpet of the Messiah. One peal, and the redemption will be at hand. Rome is the beggar's garb of Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate the sore upon his body. But under the beggar's garb Jerusalem wears the garment of heaven, and in her hand she holds the trumpet of the Messiah. Only through the Messiah can salvation come to a weary and prostrate world.

DECLARATION

Before I go on to consider the expansion of the authority through the nations of the world and the role which it played in transforming the soul of pagan man into that of Christian man, there are certain observations to be set down.

I have not the slightest intention of entering here upon a discussion with Jesus of Nazareth, or with any

of his Apostles, Paul, or Peter, or James, regarding the authenticity of the authority which Jesus claimed had been entrusted to him. Two thousand years have passed since that time; I live in a land which, God be thanked, counts my fellow-countrymen by the scores of millions, and I am at peace with them as they are with me. The vast majority of them recognize the authenticity of the authority of Jesus, and surely they do not need my ratification, or anyone else's. I come in daily contact with Christianity in a thousand ways, and with or without my ratification Christianity is a vast and established fact. As one who lives in the present, I accept the fact. I must reckon with it as a repository of great religious and moral forces which have played their role in world history, and I must deal with it within the framework of this enterprise. For it is not my purpose to polemize with anyone or to offer an apologia for my own faith. What I seek in this work, as in my preceding works, whatever their form may be, is the truth; I seek it according to my ability, and finding it I shall utter it according to my conscience. I know of no other platform on which honest-thinking and well-intentioned men may assemble. And though they belong to various religious groups, between which there have arisen, in the bloody course of history, all manner of suspicions and hostilities, the truth will wipe out the frontiers which divide them and open their eyes to the common moral values of their faiths—the common heritage of all mankind. I do not believe that by trading a few dogmas in our faiths we shall reach a better understanding between Jews and Christians. That understanding can only

be reached in and through an understanding between Judaism and Christianity—and that in turn will not result from driving a sort of religious bargain—you yield on this point, I'll concede you the other. On the contrary, it is manlier and more honest to stand by one's point, maintain one's system, and at the same time make an earnest effort to find a way back to the common sources of both systems of faith. There is no necessity, either, for the one side to diminish the role of the other—there is glory for all—in the development of the moral values of mankind, or to maneuver for strategic advantage in the history of religion. Let them both stand firm upon their own ground. Let their inspiration be rather faith itself than theologic form, and a God-fearing forthrightness which cannot be intimidated by the shallow zeal of the self-opinionated.

These preliminary observations are relevant to the work in hand; they are also relevant to some of the sharp utterances of zealots concerning my work *The Nazarene*.

Chapter Eight

THE RENEWAL OF THE AUTHORITY FOR THE GENTILES

It was in the days when Tiberius was Emperor in Rome, Vitellius proconsul in Syria, Pontius Pilate procurator of Judaea, Herod Antipater ethnarch of Galilee, and Joseph Kaifa (better known as Caiaphas) High Priest in Jerusalem, that a man (shall we use that designation?) went out from one of the ravines which enclose the modest little town of Nazareth. He left behind him the hill country and descended into the Valley of Jezreel, threading his way on foot past the settlements and farms which dotted the level stretches, till he came to the shore of the Sea of Gennesaret, and the town of K'far Nahum, or Capernaum. It was that time of the year which follows on the rainy season. The earth was heavy with dampness, as it always is there in the early spring, but, again as always, its renewal was already evident to the senses. A tender, grassy carpet was stretched out from the lower reaches of the hills of Gilead, and on this the man trod, leaving behind him the imprint of his footsteps. But it was not only on the soil which sustained him that he left his imprint; with every footprint he impressed himself upon the form of all

the earth, imparting to it the aspect which it presents to this day.

What was it that constituted the coming of this incomprehensible personality, which has become for the entire Christian world the symbol of the coming of the Messiah? He himself divided his advent into two parts: in the first he came to prepare man and the world for the Kingdom of God; in the second he would come upon the clouds in heaven as judge and ruler of the Kingdom of Heaven when it should have begun on earth.

What was the substance of his activity in his first coming? It may be divided, again, into three parts: to bring the tidings of the authority which had been given into his keeping by his father in heaven; to make of his sojourn among men an example of the life which is guided and informed by the authority of the faith; to accept of his own free will a martyr's death, paying this price for his mission and for the authority of the Messiah which had been entrusted to his keeping.

What was the substance of his teaching? It consisted primarily—and this we must bear constantly in mind—in faith in the heavenly father, who was the one and only God of Israel, but Who had spread out His grace upon all mankind and would send His Savior for the redemption of all. Everyone who is converted to the belief in the Heavenly Father and His Messiah thereby becomes a son of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with full equality of rights and therefore with his portion in the Kingdom of Heaven. That belief carries with it the obligation of a life under the law. It is regulated by the laws and commandments of the Torah of Moses, concerning

which he said that "heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the Law." Like every Rabbi of his time, he gave to the detailed interpretation of the laws and commandments his own special form and system. Thus, for instance, in one part, such as the laws of divorce, he was more severe than the House of Hillel, surpassing even the severity of the House of Shammai. In regard to the Sabbath, however, he inclined to leniency—"danger to life" outweighs "the law of the Sabbath"—defending this view by citing an incident from the life of King David; and this leniency was later accepted by the Rabbis. The washing of hands, which was a tradition and not a law, he abolished altogether. But not only did he preach the laws and commandments of Moses, but he enjoined upon his followers to do as the Pharisees preached, "for the Pharisees sit on the seat of Moses." He also added a series of new laws which, far from weakening or undermining the spirit of the Torah and the Prophets, strengthened and extended it, for their roots are identical with those which fed the old ones. He interpreted the injunction "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" as applying equally to one's enemy; and he laid down other ethical rules of conduct which breathe the spirit of the Prophets and of the House of Hillel.

All that he taught rested on a double foundation: the love of God and the love of one's neighbor—and the second injunction occurs soon after the text "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy might...." In all of this he was in complete accord with the men of learning of his time, as we learn from the dispute with a

scribe in the court of the Temple. To him Jesus said: "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of Heaven." He taught his doctrine, in keeping with the method of the scholars of his time, by word of mouth; and like them, he employed two forms: *Halachah*, or exposition, and *Agadah*—aphorisms and parables. His utterances rank with those of the Psalmist and the Prophets as the highest achievement of the Jewish genius.

Why, specifically, may they so be ranked? Not because of the beauty of form which he imparted to his parables; and not even because of the ethical values which they transmit. They are part of the highest expression of the Jewish genius because they open up new sources of religious fruitfulness.

Jesus of Nazareth was not merely a Rabbi of his time; had he been that, he would have been nothing more. If we seek to evaluate the full significance of the message and life of Jesus, who has become the most important single factor in our civilization, we must gather up the strength to leap to each other across the frightful barriers—seas of blood and bitterness, the ashes of autos-da-fé, and the bones of slaughtered martyrs—which separate the two religions; and, standing side by side, we must then examine the purely religious values which are involved. With all its fidelity to the spirit and style of the Jewish scholars, of his time, the teaching of Jesus did nevertheless pass beyond the boundary, to stand in a place of its own. Had it not done so it would most probably have remained within the framework of Jewish interpretation, and would not have created a world religion. What was quite new in

the teaching of Jesus was that for the first time there appeared in Israel a teacher who, while in agreement with the law of Moses, did not derive his authority from that law, merely interpreting it according to his own lights, as others had always done. But instead he appealed to an authority which had been entrusted to his keeping.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. *But I say unto you*, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Now the whole of this passage, without those words *But I say unto you* could, without much difficulty, be fitted into the moral aphorisms of the Ethics of the Fathers, as the independent view of a Rabbi, and as an acceptable rule of right conduct. But the “I say unto you” changes the passage in that one essential character, placing upon it the stamp of the mandate. “For,” Matthew reports, “he spoke as one having authority.” This, then, is not exposition of the Law of Moses as given on Sinai; it is “the tongue of the power.” He had heard this from the lips of God. And new again in the history of all Jewish doctrine was the fact that a teacher or lawgiver included himself in the article of faith: “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my father which is in heaven.”

The element of authority in the teaching of Jesus

became the cornerstone of the Christian faith, the foundation of the Pauline theology. In it Paul found justification for the creation of the new religion and for compromises with the law. For it was only by means of the authority which Jesus claimed to have in his keeping that the Pauline theology was able to open new sources of religious values and spread them over new areas of the human race.

We may even put it thus: Jesus not only thought of himself as carrying the mandate; he considered himself part of the mandate. He included himself in the substance of the faith. He is a significant part of it by "the flesh and blood of the new covenant." He is, moreover, able to distribute the authority among his own messengers. "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." And again: "For wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Are not these like words which God Himself has spoken: "There where my name is mentioned I shall come to bless you."

The Prophets too had rejected the sacrifices in favor of good deeds. Isaiah said to the Jews, in the name of God: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts . . . incense is an abomination unto me . . . the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with it . . . and your appointed feasts my soul hateth. When ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek

judgment." In this sense too other Prophets spoke. Jeremiah likened the Temple to a den of robbers. But when the Prophets do this, it is in the spirit of a revolt against the static law and against the petrification of the external ritual. They speak in the name of a higher service, the goodness of God, His grace and judgment. And still they are within the framework of the law.

But when Jesus of Nazareth said to one of his disciples, speaking of the Temple: "Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be destroyed"—when he spoke thus he was no longer a rebel against a petrified law in the name of a higher law; he was a rebuilder of the law. And though Jesus said of himself, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it," the fact was that he brought to the fulfillment not the authority of Moses but a new authority which he had in his own keeping.

It was regarding this authority that the Rabbis investigated, and asked ceaseless questions, and demanded a sign, as they had been bidden to do in the Torah of Moses "when a prophet shall rise unto you." And the Priests asked him: "Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he who gave thee this authority?" No sign was offered them, and they refused to accept him as the Messiah. And what is the sign of the Messiah? The sign of the Messiah is the fulfillment of the vision concerning him as seen by the Prophets: "And the wolf shall lie down with the ram." It is, in other words, the advent of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. Only he who can meet the obligation laid upon him by the Prophets will be recognized by the Jews as the

King Messiah, and his will be the right to cancel the previous authority and to introduce his own. . . .

And only the failure to obtain a clear and categoric answer upon this question explains why the Jews were unable to accept the new authority. The gentiles—i.e., the nations—were able to accept this authority, because they rested under no other authority. But the Jews were bound to the authority which had been given to Moses on Sinai, and which they had recognized with their promise of obedience. They could not pass to the new authority without the sign which should proclaim that the old had been canceled and the new one validated. This was the burden of their continuous request. But concerning this, we shall say more in the sequel.

By means of the authority which Jesus of Nazareth proclaimed he had in his keeping, Christianity was able to spread through the nations. With the power of this authority Paul was able, later on, in his Epistle to the Romans, to make the personality of Jesus the foundation of his Christian theology, asserting that every believer in the Messiah had died with him and had again been born in him. With the same power he was able to proclaim himself, in the Epistle to the Galatians, an apostle not of men, neither by man, but of the Messiah himself, and to declare also the independence of the Christian faith from the Jewish law, to which James would have kept it bound.

Everything else that is comprised in the life, the acts, the sayings, and the death of Jesus, however necessary it may have been for the manifestation of his mission, however important a role it played in the subsequent

theology, ritual, and mysticism of Christianity, and however creative it may have been in the field of the faith, was not a specific factor of his Messiahship; it was only given standing, and strengthened in its influence, by being associated with the first principle of his Messiahship, namely his special authority, deriving direct from God, to fulfill the first part of his mission and prepare the world for the Kingdom of Heaven. The birth of Christianity is not to be attributed to the fact that its founder, Jesus, was a high, ethical personality. There were in his time many high, ethical personalities. The submission of his life to the strict law (we must not forget that it was Paul who laid the foundations of the separate faith of Christianity; Jesus stood, like every other Jew, "under the law") was self-understood. Nor was it for the healing of the sick, the restoring of the dead, and the performance of other miracles, that Jesus was accepted by his followers as the Messiah. There were in his day many, many others who performed the same wonders. Every Jewish scholar who was a member of the Sanhedrin had to be a practical magician, so that he might not be taken in by the practices of other magicians. In his day wonders were so natural that no one "wondered" at them. In every city which the Apostles visited they encountered magicians, soothsayers and star-gazers who performed miracles. No Messiah had ever been proclaimed for the miracles he had performed; and there is a specific statement in the law, or Torah: "Miracles are not the signs of a prophet." Nor was it in the magnificence of his martyr's death, which has become such a source of religious inspira-

tion to the civilized world, that Jesus demonstrated his Messiahship to his disciples. There were many in his day who died magnificently for their convictions and ideals, and were not proclaimed Messiahs. The deeds of Jesus of Nazareth acquire their religious value and become factors of high importance in the new faith, through the proclamation that he holds in his hand the authority of God—as the Messiah; through Peter in Caesarea Philippi; through the declaration of Jesus that he “will sit on the right hand of the power and will come with the clouds of heaven,” made at the trial before the High Priest; and through many other indications that he is the “Son of man”; in short, through the claim that he holds in his hand the authority of the Messiah, given to him by his father in heaven.

The other incidents of his life were the results of this claim. He does not even consider himself good. “Why callest thou me good? Only one is good, and he is God.” In his conduct toward the Pharisees he even betrays the human weakness of passion; he accepts his death as something self-understood; he announces it in advance, more than once. He prophesies also his sufferings and his rising after the third day. “And he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the gentiles”—not to the Jews—“and shall be mocked and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.” (Luke 18:31-33.) Death is the natural and self-understood

consequence which issues from his acceptance of the mission, for herein he must fulfill the words of the Prophets. It is a condition of Messiahship, and no one is responsible for that. For the martyr death of the Messiah is part of the course of his ministration. No one, not even he himself, can take the cup of bitterness away from his lips.

I cannot imagine a devout Christian saying to himself: "What would have happened if the authority of God, if the martyr death of Jesus had never happened?" For with regard to such personalities as Jesus one cannot say: "Suppose such and such an event had not occurred in his life...." The incidents of such lives are necessities, and before they are made explicit as incidents they are already implicit in the spirit. In the same way one cannot say: "How would it be if the sun were not to shine?" The life and the death of Jesus were alike a part of the cardinal principle in the creation of the Messiah. Therefore no one can be accused of having been instrumental in the fulfillment. This is not the place for the rehearsal of the material in which scholars, basing themselves on careful historical research, have proved that in any event, whoever did happen to be the instrument of the death of Jesus, it was not historic Jewry. With that aspect of the question I cannot deal here at length, but as a Jew I may permit myself what the devout Christian may not: I may speculate on the place which Jesus of Nazareth would have occupied in the spiritual life of the Jewish people, by virtue of his teaching, his acts, and his martyr death, if he had not

proclaimed that he carried with him the authority of the Messiah.

Such a one, had he lived in the time of the first Temple, or in the Babylonian interlude, or even in the early days of the Return, when the people was still in the condition to accept prophets, would undoubtedly have been placed in their ranks. His life would have been an inspiration, like that of Elisha or Jeremiah, and his death would have been sanctified like that of the Ten Martyrs of Hadrian. In his own day, when the people was no longer in the condition to accept prophets, he would have been included among the Rabbis. His sayings, his parables and his doctrine would have been among the pearls of the Ethics of the Fathers; his prayer would have been included in our psalter; his life would have been crowned with the crown of the martyr in the pages of the Agadah. We have lost a Prophet. We miss, even to our own day, the golden page of the sayings of Jesus; that, however, was the price we paid in order that the Jewish genius might give the world a redeemer who brought it under the authority of God.

The Jews did not know Jesus as an "authority." There was, side by side with the absence of the sign, a deeper reason. Jesus, as we have recalled, divided his mission into two parts, two "advents." In the first he was to prepare the world and man for the Kingdom of Heaven, so that, as he put it to Nicodemus, man might be born in a new birth, not of the flesh, but of the spirit. But it was only in the second advent, when he would appear on the clouds, would the Kingdom of Heaven begin, that

is, the rule of the Messiah. Now as to the first part of the mission, this was not necessary for the Jews. They were already under the authority of God, by way of Moses and the Prophets. They did not need the birth in the spirit because they were born in the spirit; as children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob they were part of the covenant of Abraham. What they did need, what they did wait for—and are still waiting for—is the advent of the Messiah for the institution of the reign of the Kingdom of Heaven. That momentary expectation was and is the mark of the devout Jew; upon this he has staked all his being.

When the disciples were together and saw their Rabbi returned to life, their first question to him was: "Lord, wilt thou return to bring the Kingdom of Heaven?" For when they saw him again among the living, the Apostles took it as the second advent, and as devout Jews they could not imagine the Kingdom of Heaven without the kingdom of Israel, which among all Jews plays an important role in the fulfillment of the mission of the Messiah. Luke, who describes the scene, probably heard it from Peter himself, when he was in Jerusalem together with the Apostle Paul. Peter told him how they were waiting for the return of the Messiah, to make an end of the kingdom of evil, and to begin the Kingdom of Heaven with the re-institution of the Kingdom of Israel. They soon became convinced that the return of Jesus was not the second advent nor the second coming of the Messiah.

The first coming of the Messiah was not for us but for the gentiles. Such, I believe, must be the conclusion

of those among us who shake off the memory of the tortures which have been inflicted on us and estimate the significance of the moral contribution which Christianity brought to the world. They must feel this with Gamaliel, when he said at the trial of Simon: "If the work is the work of man, it will fall; but if it is the work of God ye cannot destroy it, lest ye find yourselves at war with God." If the thing is of God, then, I believe that it was not created with human power, but with the power of authority; and if the authority is not for us, the Jews, it is certainly for the nations of the world, who have thereby been brought nearer to their father in heaven.

And seeing him in this light, we bow our heads before him as we do before every one of our Prophets.

And for the second coming, that is to say, for the coming of the Messiah, we wait together with the rest of the tormented world.

Chapter Nine

THE BRINGING OF THE AUTHORITY TO THE GENTILES

No one has ever furnished a clear answer to the great question which many have asked: why did the non-Jewish world, which at that time was undoubtedly ripe for the acceptance of a new moral faith, have to turn to the Jews? In the days of the ministration of the Apostles there was evident among Greek thinkers a tendency toward a summing up of Greek moral philosophy, and toward the formulation of an ethical system founded on Platonism and on Neo-Platonism, the latter of which was beginning to separate itself from the doctrines of the Stoics. All this is shown clearly in the moralistic sayings which were collected by Seneca and in the lofty meditations which, somewhat later, Marcus Aurelius set down during the siege of Vienna. Mommsen puts it thus, in his characteristic way: "There had begun to emerge in the Roman world a raw faith accompanied by speculative ideas, the first appearance of that which we call Neo-Platonism." A great longing for a moral life brought the gentiles to the synagogues of the hated Jews. Paul, who more than once threw off the Jewish claim to priority, with the words, "Now I will go to the gentiles," nevertheless always went first, as soon as

he arrived in a town, to the synagogue. For it was only in the Jewish synagogues that he could find ears attuned to his message and find them not only among the Jews, but also among the God-seeking gentiles who besieged the synagogues.

The question presents itself quite naturally: why did not the gentiles work out a moral faith of their own, using the material of their philosophic systems and basing it on one of their gods—perhaps the “unknown god” whom Paul found among the Greeks, or perhaps even a god of Egypt or Persia, who would have set a lower price on the privilege of admission to his heaven than did the God of the Jews? Actually such a god would have been closer to their ways of thought and to their concepts of strength and beauty, would have been more in consonance with their character and mood. Faith would then have been obtainable without great sacrifices. Nor would the gentiles have had to apply to the God of a people which was in any case hated by the heathen world and alien to it in character and in conceptions of divinity.

Let us consider first how the gentiles regarded the perfection of the body as the highest human and divine virtue. They looked with horror on the rite of circumcision, certainly not because they were afraid of the trivial operation, but because they sanctified the flawlessness of the body. To them comes Paul, preaching a Messiah who was crucified and a faith which calls on every man to be crucified in the spirit with the Messiah. It is true that he brought them also the “unknown God”; but the emphasis was on the crucified Messiah.

Crucifixion was the death reserved for slaves and criminals! This slave-death Paul set at the center of the new faith which he brought to the gentiles. More, he insisted that they share in just that death: "We all, who have been baptized in Christ, have been baptized to his death; we were tormented and crucified with Christ, and we rose with Christ."

It is an amazing phenomenon: hatred of the Jews has so blinded certain Christian scholars that they turn the record upside down to prove that Paul, this Pharisee of the Pharisees, was an epitome of all the heathen tendencies of his time and to make of him a propagandist of Greek philosophy who merely used Jesus as his vehicle. I see in this the same blasphemy as in the speculations of other "scholars" who would have Jesus anything in the world—a Hindoo, if you like—rather than a Jew.

Paul of Tarshish, or Tarsus, rose above the bitternesses which the Jews had inflicted on him—and he upon them—and emphasized with pride and dignity his membership in the Jewish people; he went further and recognized his debt to his Rabbi and his school. Paul the Apostle made effective use of the methods which he had learned as Saul—among the Pharisees.

No law, however closely it penetrated the minutiae of daily life, however fine the net it flung about the words, acts, and thoughts of men, however it controlled the most intimate relationships, listening to the private converse of husband and wife, peeping—literally—into every pot on the fire—no law, in brief, such as had been drawn like a hedge about the Jewish people, could have

transformed the character of the gentiles, uprooted the uncleanness which they had accumulated in their deification of physical strength, their contempt for weakness, their cruelty toward cripples—nothing could have achieved this end as well as the baptism into Judaism, via “the baptism into the death of Christ,” which Paul brought to them. Moses came to a people of slaves, debased and humiliated by centuries of oppression, and lifted it to the supreme level of human freedom. For the terrified hordes stood on the shore of the open sea, the enemy close-pressing behind, and when God said: “Why do you cry to me? Say to the children of Israel, that they go forward,” they went forward! In exactly the same way Paul came to a gentile people, slaves in the spirit, and brought to it the supreme liberation. In accepting the faith in a Messiah deliverer who had been crucified, and with whom they too had been crucified, they accepted suffering not as a sign of God’s rejection, which had been their view till then, but as a sign of God’s highest favor. Weakness and humiliation are not evidences of unworthiness or of a divine curse, calling for the punishment of the Tarpeian Rock; they are evidences of divine election. Not beauty and physical strength are the highest gifts of heaven, but love, a contrite heart, compassion, and humbleness of spirit. Paul freed them from the Jewish law and bound them in the bonds of the Jewish spirit: “Being made free from sin, ye become the servants of righteousness.” (Epistle to the Romans 6:18.)

Jesus was not only a Jew by birth but, what is of crucial importance, a Jew in his influence by the power of

the authority which was in his keeping. For that authority was Jewish through and through; it had been earned in Jewish suffering, sustained in Jewish hope. The authority of the Messiah, his doctrine, his deeds, his life, his death—everything that afterwards became the “Sinai” of the Christians—was Jewish in character, in significance, and in form. All the values which unfolded in Christianity, love, pity, patience, insight, restraint, the essentials of our civilization, are Jewish values. Their roots are thrust deep into Jewish earth, and they reach back to Jewish beginnings, to the covenant with Abraham, the sacrifice of Isaac, and the blessings of Jacob; they are watered by Jewish sources, by the law of Moses, the ministrations of the Prophets, the words of the Psalmist. They were interwoven with the spiritual personality of Jesus. Through the body of Jesus, Paul brought to the gentile world the spirit of the God of Israel; and that not in separate distillations of laws, but in one single great gift.

Was it all a mistake and a mismatching? Regrets are too late—through Jesus the gentiles were wedded to Judaism. The match was made. Judaism and Christianity stood together under the bridal canopy; now, do what you will, the gentiles are as legitimate children of the union as are the Jews, spiritual seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, even though only “circumcized in the foreskin of the heart.” I know only too well that the match was marred by much quarreling; there was much too much disputing on the subject of the heritage of the fathers. And as in all quarrels the stronger party won, not by argument but by force—and by methods which

stopped at nothing. But the weaker party did not give up. To this day the relationship between the two is not regulated by the spiritual values which are their common property. Instead, it is influenced by the bloody heritage of generations. A pall of smoke, which went up from the fires of the Inquisition, stands between the two. And yet, however bitter the quarrel became, the marriage has not been broken off. It cannot be.

Assuredly even the baptism in the death of Jesus did not perform the miracle which Paul expected, namely, the transformation of the character of the gentiles. "For I know that in me [that is, in my flesh] dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Still, there was set up a standard and a measure of goodness for the gentiles, even as the law was given to the Jews at Sinai. More, there has been created an eternal admonisher for the gentiles—the conscience. Its insistent cry is: how shall Christian man do evil, he who has suffered all that Jesus suffered, who died with him and was reborn with him? Has he not been purified by the death which Jesus died for his sins? His limbs are consecrated because they belong to Jesus. "Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. . . . Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

"Is he then the God of the Jews alone? Is he not also the God of the gentiles?" Yes, of the gentiles too.

Paul's conception of baptism in the death of Jesus, which he brought to the gentiles, is, more than any other

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factor, responsible for the remolding of heathen man
into Christian man.

From Caesarea, and by way of all the ports of Asia Minor, Julius, a centurion of the legion called Augustus, led Paul in chains to Rome, there to stand trial. Paul is chained to one of the legionaries, in the sight of all. But what neither Julius nor the legionaries can see is the chain which Paul bears with him to bind the gentiles in the spirit of Judaism.

Christianity was brought to a world which was ripe to receive it, a world which was virgin soil, unladen with law, untouched by a first authority. It was ready to receive, without an uprooting, the faith in the Messiah and in the heritage of the fathers.

Has Christianity fulfilled the hope of that planting? Has it lived in righteousness? Has Christian man become the vessel of Jesus, as Paul intended that he should? No one who looks into the pages of history can answer in the affirmative. Until the second advent, until the coming of the Messiah, nothing is perfect, not even faith. Have the Jews, under that first authority which came to them of old, fulfilled the hope which Moses and the Prophets had of them? They have not. Had they done so, it would not have been necessary for the learned men of Israel, in ancient times, to draw about them the close-woven net of their laws.

But it did not take Paul long to realize that if he was to maintain a continuous contact between the gentiles he had converted and God, it was not enough to supply them with the empty framework of the faith; there had to be, within that framework, a pattern of good deeds,

as Jacob had taught. If we look a little deeper, we shall perceive that Paul actually did not oppose the laws. What he did was to divide believers into those who stood under the law, and those who stood under grace, that is, under the faith. He did not make the abrogation of circumcision a categoric condition for reception into the faith of Jesus. What he did was very different: he simply did not make circumcision a categoric condition for gentiles who wanted to be received into the faith, as the Church of Jerusalem did in the beginning. "Those who are circumcized in the flesh and those who are circumcized in the heart, in the spirit" were alike for him the children of Abraham. He himself had Timothy circumcized before he took him along on his travels, because Timothy's mother was a Jewess (and according to the Jewish law, the child belongs to the mother, as the calf does to the cow). Paul lived under the law like an observant Pharisee, until the very day of his death. He often took upon himself prohibitions and was strict in the observation of the law which proceeded from his vow. And therefore he began to fill the framework of the faith with patterns of right conduct even for the gentiles, teaching that these patterns were the flesh of the faith.

He soon perceived that the bond with God which he had made with the gentiles out of pure faith was too ethereal. Faith in the spirit alone can be the faith of the elect only. Faith had to take on flesh and blood, tangible substance, for the gentiles, who made use of the abrogation of the law to excuse their relapse into the idol worship and the looseness of sexual life which was common among their neighbors. His epistles are filled with

the stern admonitions of a prophet against the abominations which he curses; he erects now a whole series of laws and rules of conduct; he defines the marriage relationship and the relations between men and women; he teaches the women how to conduct themselves; he teaches the men how to honor their wives. He defines the relation between individual and state, between master and servant; he gives specific form to the principle of brother-love which Jesus taught; he introduces among the gentiles (a tremendous innovation) the principle of the Sabbath, bidding them on that day assemble as the Jews do in the synagogues, but shifting the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. He teaches them to give charity, collects contributions among them for the holy ones in Jerusalem, and the gentiles send their money to the poor of that city even as the Jews do; he plants in their hearts love and compassion. It would not be too much to say that Paul is responsible for the Ten Commandments, which became the cornerstone of the faith for the gentiles, as they did among the Jews. To Paul may be applied the saying: "He threw the law out at the front door and smuggled it in again by the back door." Before the gentiles had had a chance to look round properly, they found themselves carrying upon their shoulders the same heavy yoke of the law as the Jews!

And it is well to observe that with all the bitterness toward the Jews which has been engendered by the quarrel round the origins of the new faith, no one of that faith ever had so deep a love of the Jewish spirit as Paul himself. No one else went so deep into its sources, and no

one else ascribed so glorious a role to the Jews: "My kinsmen according to the flesh, who are the Israelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came...." (Romans 9: 3, 4, 5.) And no one else did as much to spread the spirit and lore of God as this Pharisee of the Pharisees, who used all the methods of the school in which he was brought up to make that spirit acceptable to the gentiles and fruitful until the present day.

But Paul was not the only one who molded Christian man. It is true that he is the blood and marrow of the Catholic theology, responsible more than any other individual for the transformation of Hellenistic into Christian man. His passionate nature, his restless Jewish spirit, and his thirst for salvation supplied the impulse for the subsequent metamorphoses of the Catholic church, from the highest religious values which it created, to the tragic decline of the Inquisition and the equally tragic religious wars which it waged. But if Paul was the blood and marrow of the theology of the church, then James, the brother of the Lord, was its conscience and Simon bar Jonah its heart.

How can it possibly be contended that Jacob ben Joseph, the brother of Jesus and stepchild of the Church, was the embodiment of the static law? On the contrary, he was the embodiment of the highest law, or of the highest virtue and commandment crystallized by Jesus in the dispute with the scribe in the Temple courtyard: love of God and love of one's fellow man. James was the

embodiment of that love which Paul so movingly describes and praises. James believed that faith issues in works, not because deeds are the obligation of the law but because they are the obligation of love. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so, faith, if it hath not deeds, is dead, being alone." (James 2:14-17.) James was the Amos and Isaiah of the new faith. Like them, he set up love of man, justice, and good deeds as the highest service of God. It is an echo of the words which his far-off prototypes of the older faith utter in the name of God: "Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth . . . seek judgment . . . judge the fatherless, plead for the widow . . . what mean ye that ye oppress my people and grind the faces of the poor?" And James: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of the world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?" (James 2:5-6.) And again: "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have con-

demned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.”
(James 5:4-6.)

Not a severe, unbending Pharisee, whose life and heart are intertwined with the laws and who sternly admonishes all others that they observe the minutiae of the laws—not such a one was this James, as he is revealed through the eyes of Luke and Paul, and as he reveals himself in his own Epistle; but a Prophet, who transplanted into the new religion the ancient faith of the God of Israel, reliance on his promise of the coming of the Messiah, good deeds, social justice, forbearance—in short, all the religious values which are to be found in the Prophets of Israel. Had the Church taken the road indicated by James, had James instead of Paul become the ruling spirit of the Church, who knows how much nearer we would be today to the realization of the prophetic ideal?

His influence on the formation of the Christian character and on the molding of the Church during the early period, is enormous. His participation in the Church of Jerusalem was powerful during his lifetime, and hardly less so after his death, acting through the medium of Peter. It imparted to that organization, and therefore to the first Christians, a profound sense of unification with God which acted as a counterweight to the passionate, mystic influence exerted by Paul. His power lay in the bond which he maintained between the early Church and the body from which it sprang—the Jewish law. He endowed Christianity with the strict pattern of concrete deeds or works which belonged to Judaism, thereby avoiding the danger courted by Paul of permitting the

Church to relapse, as a result of the vagueness of his formula and a relaxation of the bonds, into the idol-worship and dissoluteness of the surrounding Hellenistic world. Later on Paul appreciated this. The struggle between James and Paul centered on this danger. It was not because Paul had preached to the Galatians without the authority of the Church of Jerusalem that James sent his own delegation with Peter at the head; his purpose was to remind the gentiles that the faith in the Messiah which Paul preached carried with it a definite obligation, namely, a life of purity. The influence of James in the subsequent history of the Church is diffuse and fragmentary. Here and there it acted as a stimulus on individual spirits; the fullness of his power is exerted very late, in the days after the tragic decline, when a new Church emerged.

There is a remarkable and instructive circumstance in connection with that emergence. Luther had it in mind to omit the Book of James from his translation of the Bible. He found it too Jewish in spirit and called it a gospel of straw. But it is precisely the Epistle of James which became the cornerstone of the new religious movement which Luther headed.

When the Catholic Church became old and static, when its arteries had hardened and were incapable of transmitting the nourishment from the first source, it was James who fought against it, even as in the days of Paul. He sent his messengers to the "Galatians" of later ages, in the personalities of Huss, Luther, Calvin, and the other reformers. His was the sword with which they were armed; it was upon his teaching and his blessings, de-

rived from the ancient Jewish Prophets, that they leaned: faith in the God of Heaven, and his promise of the Messiah, the pure ethical life to which faith obligated man, the social justice of the Prophets, the humble and contrite spirit. These were the foundations of the Kingdom of God which Huss and Calvin proclaimed; and though in their methods they made their own detours from this path, and inclined toward Ezra, the principle of justice which they accepted came direct from what James had taught, and attained to high fruition in George Fox and the Quakers. We are, in our own day, the beneficiaries of these reconstructions, and it may well be that they, more than anything else, carry within themselves the hope of the world.

No: the influence of James the brother of Jesus is not a thing of the past. To him, perhaps more than to any other Apostle, is attached the redemption of the future. In the religious values which he embodied we shall find help in our bloodiest problems, for they are rooted in what is deepest and most meaningful in the faith—the love of God and of one's fellow men.

And, most remarkable of all: Peter and Paul met death, according to the account, at the hands of Edom, which is Rome; but James, saintly and pure and holy, James, who prayed and fasted whole days in the Temple of Jerusalem, James, who has left traces of his influence in the records of the Jews, met his martyr's death at the hands of an abominable High Priest, Hanan ben Hanan, whose deeds moved the Rabbis to send the most violent protests to Agrippa II, and whom in the end they managed to get deposed.

Between these two pillars of the infant Church, between the "Apostle to the Jews" and the "Apostle to the gentiles" stood Simon bar Jonah, called Peter, or Petrus, the rock. Quite definitely he had not the learning and the firmness of a James; to an even lesser degree did he have the religious genius of a Paul. He had only his simple faith, his moving love and his rock-like trust. This was enough to give him the position of the golden mean of the Church between the two extremists. Peter was more insistent than the other two in his emphasis on the holy spirit within him, that is, on the authority which he derived direct from Jesus. His had been the privilege of acting as the servant of his lord and Rabbi; upon him Jesus had put his hands, calling him "the rock" upon which he would build his house. To him and to the other disciples Jesus appeared first after his death, and bade him carry the message to the world. He wrought more mightily with the holy spirit than the others. He appeals to it continuously, that is, to the authority entrusted to him; and it renews itself in him, so that he is capable of transmitting it to others. The holy spirit does not rest upon the congregation which Philip and the others founded in Samaria and various other cities until Peter comes to them. Very definitely Paul does not make use of the gift of tongues; and as he himself put it, though he did possess the gift of speaking with tongues, he preferred a few words spoken soberly, and coming from the mind, than a thousand utterances with "tongues." Of James we hardly hear that he made use of "tongues." But Peter must have recourse to "tongues," because his words and works do not derive

from learning or dry intelligence, but from inspirations and visions.

In the earliest days of the Church it is the simple fisher-Jew of K'far Nahum who leads out the congregation on to the world arena—that is, the Temple court-yard. He carries it on his hands, with Johanaan (John) at his side, and fights its first battles. (James, it seems, came to Jerusalem later. In any case, neither Luke nor Paul mention his activity at the beginning.) The fisherman who betrayed such cowardice during the lifetime of his Rabbi, and denied him three times, rises to the heights of endurance when the responsibility devolves on him. In my view it is he, and not Stephen, who witnesses first, not only before the Jews at large, but before the High Priest; and he is prepared to accept the consequences. It is not easy to imagine the struggle through which he must have passed when he summoned up the courage to fling in the teeth of the High Priest the proud reference to his Rabbi: "This stone which you have despised has become the chief cornerstone." This was the fiery and successful test of his essential firmness and faith, that he should charge the High Priest with the responsibility for the death of Jesus. By this time he is prepared to suffer everything for the faith. And in the days when Paul was still Saul, busy with the persecution of the faithful, Peter is the first to be scourged for his proclamation of the faith and, like another Jeremiah, to be flung into prison.

Again: it is Simon bar Jonah who, ten or fifteen years before the conversion of Paul, makes his first contact with the gentiles in Joppa; and noting, it would seem,

the difficulty which the observation of the laws of *kash-ruth* (pure and impure food) interposes in the way of the spread of the faith, he puts the law to one side. He does this in consequence of a vision in a trance; he sees a vessel descending from heaven, filled with all manner of four-footed beasts and wild beasts and creeping things . . . and he hears a voice: "Rise, kill and eat . . . what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." It probably needed no more than a single admonition from the strict observer of the law, James, to make Peter, on his return to Jerusalem, forget that vision. (We cannot otherwise understand the absence of all reference to the incident later on, when he will not break bread at one table with the gentile Christians at Galatia, according to the accusation of Paul.) But it is also Peter who sends the first messengers of the faith to the gentiles, even as far as Rome. Before Paul comes to Rome, a congregation already exists there, to which he can address an Epistle. And again it is Peter who takes the tidings first to the gentiles.

We must not ascribe the indecision of Peter—his passage from one extreme to the other, his eating of unclean food on the one hand, his refusal to eat with gentile Christians on the other—to weakness. It was the result of an inner struggle with tremendous problems which he must solve as the head of the Church and as the carrier of the authority. These extremes were symbolized by representatives: James, who would keep the new congregation close-bound to the ancient law, and Paul, who breaks away, with all the passion of his temperament, from the bonds of the law. Peter is not

learned in the law, like James. "Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood...." (II Peter 3:15-16.) All that he has is something of the holy spirit. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn. . . ." (II Peter 1:19.) The prophecy, or the holy spirit, or the authority, is "a light that shineth in a dark place" and shows the right path. When the salt has lost its savor, when the pillars tremble and the heads of the Church are at loggerheads, when each of them sends word to the young congregations, to gentiles only just won over, denying the authority of the other and claiming it for himself, it is the simple fisher-Jew of K'far Nahum who makes the decision and makes firm the bond holding the new congregations. When, in Joppa, he perceives that the strictness of the Rabbinic ritual with regard to food and other matters is a hindrance to the spread of the faith in the Messiah, a vision permits him to dispense with the ritual. Later, the congregation in Jerusalem learns of the compromises which Paul introduced into the law so as to receive the gentiles; it learns also of the loose framework of the faith Paul taught them and of their consequent relapse into pagan practices, both of sacrifice to idols and of immorality. Then Peter hastens to them and as protest refuses to "break bread" with them (we must remember that the breaking of bread was the most sacred gesture of the new faith)

because their limbs, which are the vessels of Christ, have been contaminated by their service to the idols of whoredom. All this he does solely by the one power within him, the power of his instinct, of the holy spirit and of the authority.

It is, after all, Peter who leads the faithful of Rome to encounter the lions in the arena, Peter, not James and not Paul.

And finally it is Peter whom Christ, and the Church after him, recognizes as the rock upon which the building shall rest.

There were three channels which brought religious values to pagan man, changing his character and remolding him, so that he became aware of the measures and standards which we subsume under the words "Christian morality." The source of the value was the Messianic personality of Jesus. Both the channels and the source were Jewish.

But the source goes deep, deep into the Jewish past. For many ages its waters freshen only Jewish soil. To-day they flow across the world over many fields which once were utter deserts. True, they do not everywhere bring forth divine fruit, but neither has the soil remained utterly barren.

Christian morality became the mirror which we hold up to our deeds, an admonition to the civilized world, a measure for good and evil, a dividing date in the evolution of man. If men speak today of a Christian civilization, I, a Jew, feel myself a part of it. Its course has been devious, its inadequacies are many; its record is stained

with blood, and of that blood not a little came from the veins of my forefathers. For all that, its spirit was drawn from the sources which feed my soul. It was given by the God of Israel to my forefathers, it was warmed by the fires of my Prophets and paid for by our thousand years of pain; and therefore it is blood of my blood, bone of my bone.

Therefore whosoever stretches out his hand against it stretches out his hand against the sanctities of my soul, so that my heart rebels and the blood of my forefathers speaks in me. It is thus in our own day, when an anti-Christ has arisen. The ax has been lifted against the tree which our forefathers planted, and we Jews are horrified not alone for the sake of our share in it, but for the sake of our Christian brothers too. For if the tree falls, what will become of both of us?

The time of terror has sharpened in all of us our awareness of our common source of life. It is my hope that the closer community established in pain will be our reward in the days of our liberation.

Chapter Ten

INFLUENCES AND PARALLELS

Who will deny that that which we call our civilization—the sum of our moral goods and also our material achievements—is the result of the acceptance of the “authority” by the great world of antiquity? I do not know what our civilization would have looked like if the world of Hellenism had endured. But it could not endure. It disintegrated of itself. It is true that Christianity hastened the process; but the evidences of the inevitable inner collapse are numerous and overwhelming. They fill the period of the last representatives of the Julian line, of Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. The angel of Edom was still able to make some gestures of conquest; he was still able, also, to find the moral strength for an Antoninus Pius and a Marcus Aurelius. But the effort was shortlived, and the Roman world relapsed into the barbarism of the Caesars who preceded Constantine.

If we insist, however, on conjuring up a picture of a world which had not accepted Christianity, we have the materials for it in our own day. We may see the moral depth to which a demonic spirit has brought one great, civilized country, dragging the rest of Europe down the bloody incline. What Hitler has done may be briefly

described as the bringing back of the heathen world which existed before Jesus of Nazareth.

Who dares maintain that the Jewish God is against the gentiles? Did not the Prophets take all the nations into the Kingdom of the Messiah? From first to last they widened the skirts of the tent for all peoples, making them equal with the Jews. Egypt and Assyria were given the same ultimate privileges as Israel: "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." (Isaiah 19:24-25.) The Prophets speak in the same spirit to the gentile and the Jewish nations. Jonah is sent to Nineveh, other Prophets to Damascus, with tidings of God. It is not the heathen nations whom God would destroy, but their heathendom, "not the sinners shall be destroyed, but sin." Amalek is the arch-enemy, because Amalek is the symbol of the demonic, heathendom in its extremest form. For abomination has its spokesmen in heaven, not less than purity: Samael and Asmodeus, the enemies of all that is sacred and good. The enemy of man watches him with a thousand eyes; he lies in ambush to avail himself of every opportunity, no matter how trivial, to exploit every weakness for his undoing. The abomination, which is heathendom, is locked in a death-struggle with God, or Judaism; but it is not a struggle between gentiles and Jews.

The demonic spirit exerts itself furiously to prevent the salvation of man, and to establish its own dominion over him. The angel of Edom is field marshal of its

forces and leads them out in the great battle for the soul of mankind.

One by one the nations are taken in under the skirts of the authority. The authority spreads itself, like the spirit of God, over the nations, and one by one, sooner or later, they take upon themselves the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our European civilization begins to build on new foundations, the foundations of a new morality. Certainly the beginnings are raw and brutal, the work is done with fire and sword, amid blood and tears—according to man's nature. Man grows into the faith as he grows into his own manhood, passing through the sicknesses and relapses of childhood. He takes his first uncertain steps in Christian morality. But the growth continues, the lineaments of the man emerge more and more clearly. Orders are founded; monks go into the wildernesses and into desolate places and build churches; cities crystallize round the churches. In the gloomy forests of northern Europe, where yesterday the fury of Wotan reigned, hymns go up to the God of a strange, far land. The blood of Gallic, Germanic, and Slavic man receives, through Christianity, a considerable injection of the Jewish spirit. He starts from it, fights it off in animal protest. But the spirit works steadily, softens him, and subdues him to the yoke. New homes of learning arise on soil which until now have been steeped in darkness. The experience of classic antiquity, too, is brought into the European mind through Arabic-Hebrew channels, and begins to work there on new foundations, Christian foundations, with their implications of good and evil, of God and Satan.

New forms are created in architecture, in art, in writing, and even in the first, child-like attempts at science. A new factor has entered the world of our concepts—the factor of the “authority.” It becomes the measure and standard of all our values—and this is the supreme achievement.

It is not my purpose to pass in review, even briefly, the development of our modern culture. But it is necessary to make some allusion to the moral forces which were decisive in that development. I shall not deal with each thread in the vast tapestry, but with the design as a whole.

The umbilical cord between Christianity and Judaism is severed by Paul. The child still derives nourishment from the original divine source, but now it works out its own religious values. That has taken time. In the beginning Christianity was so completely rooted in Judaism, and carried so many of its inner and outer forms, that centuries of separation and hostility had to pass before the external, heathen world could distinguish between the two. For Christianity together with the “authority” took over the completed organization of the synagogue, so that it presented as it were the same façade. The first sixteen bishops of Jerusalem, those who inherited the seat of St. James, were circumcized Jews. Many of the compromises with the law were instituted for the sole purpose of emphasizing the newness and separateness of the faith, so that the outside world might not confuse it with the Judaism which it hated. The changing of the Sabbath from the last to the first day of the week had not the slightest basis in dogma;

it was intended to help the heathens appreciate the distinction between the two religions. But with all this straining apart, it was impossible to undo the effects of a common origin and a common source of spiritual nourishment.

Almost all the Church Fathers wrote commentaries on the Bible; and these commentaries are, with their fusion of exposition and parable, similar to the Jewish commentaries called the Midrashim. St. Augustine translated the Psalms. We shall mention, a little further on, the place of Philo in the theology of Christianity. Long after Philo, Aristotelian rationalism passed into Christianity via Maimonides and his influence on Thomas Aquinas. It was only in the nineteenth century that Avicenna, the "Arab" author of the *Fons Vitae*, a work which left an indelible imprint on Christian Scholasticism, was revealed to have been the Hebrew poet Solomon ibn Gabirol.

Our own Bible commentators, Kimchi and Rashi, were closely consulted by Christian Bible critics and Bible translators. The affinity between the Old Testament, the Prophets Ezra and Nehemiah on the one hand and the spirit of the Reformed Church on the other, is very clear. It would not be too much to say that, in spite of Luther's hostility toward the people whose history is the Bible, it was the Old Testament which imparted to the Reformation the revolutionary inspiration and energy needed to break the monopoly of Rome on the Christian faith.

In the strict sense it is proper to speak of influences only in respect of the secular aspects of the two faiths

which have been destined to live side by side as neighbors. For all their separation in ghettos, the Jews could not but be affected in their daily life, their customs, their conduct, and even their outlook by the mentality and the ways of the Christians. Jews are human beings, and like all human beings they are subject to the influence of their environment. As regards matters of faith, however—religious concepts and dogmas—the proper word is not influences but parallels; the more so when we recall the attitudes, dread on the one side, terror on the other, which divided the Jewish and Christian worlds.

These parallels in religious, mystical and ethical values which each faith has created out of its own spiritual goods are striking evidence of a community of source and nourishment. We need only consider the nature of that Messianic mission to which both faiths subscribe, to realize that they were bound to accept similar consequences in matters relating to the profoundest and most mystical relations between man and the divinity. We shall touch upon the details in the sequel; here we shall only point to the creation of "steps," "stations," "degrees," or "levels" between man and God—a common feature of the two faiths. The very role of a Messiah is that of an intermediary. For the first question that springs to one's mind is: why did God have to make use of a "Messiah" in order to bring help or salvation to man? Could not God have done it himself? In the Jewish concept as it developed later (and we may point out, in this connection, that it is a profound mistake to assert that Judaism became petrified in the Bible; if anything, it is nearer the truth to say that Judaism

developed most characteristically in post-Biblical days) the role of the Messiah is in part divine. The Messiah is not simply a powerful king who will come to liberate the Jews. Maimonides did, indeed, in his system of thought, suggest that as between our days and the days of the Messiah there would be no difference save for the coming of the Kingdom; but the Jews did not accept this system. What did take on, among the Jews, was, in fact, the Kabbalistic view of the Messiah, the role ascribed to him in the *Zohar* and popularized by the Kabbalists and the *Chassidim* of Safed: a half-divine being, a mystic personality, who had been (according, indeed, to the early legends of the Talmud) with God in the heavens before the creation of the world. The Messiah, as conceived by Judaism, is a halfway station between man and God. He is below God, but he is more than flesh and blood. The divine nature of the Messiah, in which both faiths concur, was bound to create stages or degrees in the ascent to the divinity.

And thus we see that at the very beginning, even before the emergence of Christianity, there were, in Judaism, expressions for heavenly values which designated them as divine sons and daughters—this apart from the “sons of God” who come down to earth and wed with the daughters of men. Here, in Genesis, we have an intimation of the “prehistoric” period of the Jewish faith to which we can no longer penetrate. But the designation of Wisdom as “a daughter of Heaven” can mean only one thing, to wit, that Wisdom, which is a universal force, is an agent of the divinity, a radiation which acts upon all things.

Contemporaneously with the beginnings of Christianity, before the concept of "the Son of God" had crystallized round the figure of Jesus, as the indication of his universal and divine power, we find Philo, the Alexandrian Jew, referring to the Logos, which to him is the chief agent of God in the creation of the universe, as "the oldest son of God." The father of the entire universe brought forth this son, the greatest of the sons, who elsewhere is called "My oldest son." Obviously the phrases "son of God" as used by Philo, and "daughter of God" as used in the Bible, were not intended to indicate physical offspring; they were symbols of the divine radiation. And there is no doubt that in the time of Philo, which was the period of the birth of Christianity, these expressions were in wide use as symbols of the radiations of divine attributes, and no one saw in them anything offensive or blasphemous. Quite clearly the founders of Christian theology, Paul and the Hellenistic Jew who was the author of the fourth Gospel, were under the influence of Philo.

Much later, even, when Christianity was not merely sundered from Judaism but the two faiths stood less in the relation of mother and daughter than in the relation of the disputing "mothers" in Solomon's judgment, they continued to create parallels. We need only point to the doctrine of the "Sefirot," the "spheres" or "agencies," ten in number, from the first, *Keter*, the Crown, to the last, *Malkhut*, the Kingdom, which lead from man to God, and which constitute the cornerstone of Kabbalistic mysticism. These are not only radiations of divinity; they are also the rungs of a ladder by which man may

mount to God. The Zaddik can reach the highest rung or station, and the stations are common both to the Christian and the Jewish faith. Obviously one cannot speak of influences here. The Christian priests did not go to a Jewish *cheder*; nor did the Rabbis learn the Christian faith from the compulsory debates in which they participated in the churches. The two faiths reached these common results from the common element in them, namely, the belief in a Messiah.

Such common results emerged very early. We find them in the second and third centuries, in the allusions to a "week of Messianic torment," and to the iron yoke which Messiah takes up of his own free will, in order to deliver all the souls of Israel from death. The descriptions of the sufferings of the Messiah¹ finds its parallel only in the description of the Via Dolorosa.²

We must not forget that during the first thousand years of their dispersion the Jews lived largely outside the influence of Christian rule. For a long time their lot was cast among heathens; later they were thickly settled in Mohammedan countries, where they found peace and shelter. At an early date, when Christianity became a militant power, the official Church began to persecute the Jews, so that a fiery wall was erected between the two faiths, and if anything passed from one to the other it was only bitterness. The Visigoths of Spain proceeded with such cruelty against the Jews, who had lived in that country since Roman times, that the latter were bound to see in the African Moors their liberators. It

¹ See Pesikta Rabata, 35-36, and Yalkut Shemoniah, Isaiah 60.

² See also Bialik-Ravnitzki, *Legends*, Vol. II, "Messiah."

was under Mohammedan rule in Spain and Portugal that the Jewish genius achieved its highest development in the dispersion, in a Maimonides, a Judah Halevy, a Solomon ibn Gabirol, who have placed an eternal stamp on Judaism.

No sooner did the Jews who had settled in Christian countries achieve self-expression than they gave evidence of the influence of their environment. The scholars of Ashkenaz—that is, roughly, of France and Germany—who were to a large extent the fathers of modern Judaism, responded clearly to Christian ways. The acceptance of monogamy in the famous ruling or “ban” of Rabbenu Gershom was not a necessary corollary of the Jewish faith; it issued from the influence of Christian life. Spanish Jewry did not accept the ruling, and thus we still find scattered traces of polygamy among the Oriental Jews. The interaction of Christian mores on Spanish Jewry did not become evident till much later and manifested itself through the Marrano or crypto-Jews who returned to the Jewish faith. But beyond custom and mores we may perceive, in Jewish mysticism, a parallelism with Christian thought.

The terrors of hell, the devils’ cauldrons, which the Jewish moralists invoked for the edification of their readers, are very similar to those invoked for the same purpose by the Christian moralists. The demons with forks, presiding over the fiery cauldrons, are practically identical in the Christian and Jewish pictures. In the days when Venice sent an expedition to capture the bones of St. Mark, and when throughout Europe there went on a constant stealing of holy relics, the graves of great and

pious Jews began to play a role for their people. Assemblies are held there, to plead for intervention in heaven. There is the story of the coffin of a holy Rabbi which goes floating down the Rhine; Christian fishermen try to capture it, but it eludes them; it comes to a village where Jews live, so that the body may be taken to the Holy Land and buried there. Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai, a scholar of the second century, to whom the *Zohar* is ascribed, is the saint of Kabbalists and Chasidism till this day.

Elijah the Prophet is represented as returning to life not as an angel, but as a simple Jew. He is with the Jews in every hour of need; he helps individual Jews, and not just the Jewish people. Elijah even permits himself to be sold as a slave so that the money may be given to a needy Chassid. Holy deeds like these are to be encountered also in Christian stories of the Saints.

The Jews made the Zaddik a special pleader in heaven. The Zaddik or righteous man became "the instrument of God," "the holy channel" through which the *Shekhinah*, the highest sanctity, passed from the top-most heaven to the earth. I have described the role of the Jewish Zaddik at some length in my *Salvation*. All I wish to do here is to make clear that even as in the Christian world man sought an intermediary between himself and the divinity, and found one in the Saint whose protection he invoked, so among the Jews the Zaddik became the holy man who stood between them and God. He transmits their prayers, he pleads for the abrogation of the evil edicts of rulers. But the Zaddik is represented as being able to do more than intervene:

he can even issue his own decrees, binding upon God, and thus direct the fates. "The Zaddik decrees and God carries out."

Who of us can penetrate to the depths of the mystic forces which are at work in faith? Who shall undertake to measure and apportion them, or to discover in what manner they work upon each other? Did the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Chassidism, read the New Testament and deliberately copy in many respects the founder of Christianity? Did a Leib Sosover, or a Reb Yechiel Combiner, and all the other holy Rabbis who were a light and a comfort to the poor Jewish masses, know of a St. Francis and seek to imitate him? Assuredly not. They trod the same paths as he, toward the same goal, touched like him by the inspiration, the divine spirit, which issues from faith.

We must not lose sight of the fact that it was after all in Christian lands that the Jews underwent the change from an Oriental to a European people; and the transformation was not confined to the externalities of life, but penetrated to the mind, to the manner of thinking, and to every aspect of their conduct. Long before the coming of the emancipation, before Napoleon tore down the ghetto walls of Venice, Mayence, and other cities, the Jews had become Europeans in spirit by way of the Christian culture to which they had access. The academies and universities where Jews studied, and where their books were read, were Christian. If it is true that the Jewish spirit gave Christendom its greatest artist in Rembrandt, it is also true that the Christian spirit exerted a powerful influence on our thinkers and philoso-

phers. The pantheism of Spinoza puts him closer to the Christian than to the Jewish mode of thought; and this is true of a modern like Henri Bergson, and others. If the Old Testament was a great force in the Reformation of the Christian Church, that Reformation made repayment in the influence which it exerted in the creation and on the form of our Reform Judaism.

Despite all the walls of hatred and the rivers of blood between them, the two forces crossed and recrossed. For they sought the same ends, just as they were drawn from one source, from a God in heaven and a prophetic faith.

Chapter Eleven

THE CREATOR OR THE CREATURE?

But the Pan of ancient days is not yet dead. He lurks in the jungle and crouches by the road; he has not given up the struggle with God for the possession of man. And just as Venus flits among the shadows of the Black Forest and beckons the pious pilgrims to her caves, so Pan lies in wait for all Christian men. However, it is not the simple Pan of old, and we must change our simile. This is a Pan who has messengers and instruments. He is not content with waiting in ambush. He sends out his representatives in an infinite variety of masks and costumes. He does not shrink from lending them the cowl and habit of the monk or priest. His methods are as subtle as they are innumerable. His envoys have entry everywhere, even at the gates of the sanctuary. He enters the churches, mounts the pulpit, preaches in the name of God, quotes the Bible, and holds up a crucifix.

Can the imagination conjure up a more hideous picture of Asmodeus than history itself has furnished? Under the shadow of the cross Asmodeus leads a procession of human beings in chains toward the stakes about which the faggots are heaped. What is their crime? That they believe in the one and only God of Israel. The cross, the supreme symbol of the self-sacrifice of

the pure, is lifted up as the supreme symbol of the sacrifice of purity.

"I do not want to describe all the cruelties which the gentiles practiced upon us," writes a Jewish chronicler of the Middle Ages, "because I do not wish to shame man, who was created in the image of God." Nor is this review of our cultural history the place for a description of the tortures which Christianity inflicted on the Jew for his faith in his father in heaven, or of those which the Christian sects inflicted on each other for deviations from dogma. The terror is still in our blood, and we still struggle to free ourselves of it. It is this which prevents us from achieving an objective appreciation of the values of faiths not our own.

Yet the effort must be made again and again. We must exert ourselves to the utmost, control our passions, repress our bitternesses, and replace the impulsiveness of the plaintiff with the caution of the judge. Yet shall we not be doing ourselves violence if we try to forget? And if we remember what is written in blood on the pages of history, if we remember the desolation which men have made of God's inheritance, would we not be less than human if the blood did not turn cold in our veins? There have come down to us, out of the days of the Crusades, Jewish documents which tell how men, before they died, slaughtered their wives and children, lest the latter weaken and accept the faith which priest and bishop offered them as the sole alternative to death. The horrors of Mayence and Worms and Nuremberg—the long line of the martyrs of the Inquisition—the wild, indiscriminate bloodshed of Chmelnizky's Cossacks; let

me mention them but once, and let my lips be dumb thereafter.

I have the profoundest feeling for the faith of the Catholics. Their God-longing has thrust roots to the deepest sources of the divine influence and drawn from them the richest inspiration. Their search has sent them heavenward in the towering structures of the Gothic age. Their sense of beauty has given supreme tribute to the divinity. But of what use is the God-longing which is not accompanied by the God-virtues, which is linked to hate and not to love, to cruelty and not to compassion? Longing is a force of double polarity. It may intoxicate the senses, dull the emotions, release a fury of jealousy, blind the victim to the God-longing and the love which is in others. God-longing, to find the positive pole, must go hand in hand with the longing for the God-virtues, with love for the entire creation. Without this guide, it flies to the negative pole and becomes a curse instead of a blessing. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up . . . rejoiceth not in iniquity," Paul tells us. (I Corinthians 13:4-6.)

Certainly the other churches have sinned the same sin. Within the Protestant Church, which won its religious freedom at the cost of so much sacrifice, sects have warred upon each other. The slightest deviation not merely from dogma, but from minutiae of form, have given the signal for the persecution of thousands. Like the Sadducees of old, Christians converted the word of God, which had been intended as grace, into a bill for the full pound of flesh. But granting all this,

and remembering too the medieval depths from which it struggled out, the Protestant Church has never sunk to the ghastly level of the Inquisition; there are fewer bloodstains on its altar than on the robes of the Dominicans. Nor must we forget that it was after all the Protestant Church which waged on our behalf the war of our democratic rights in God. Holland, having freed herself from Philip, and from the chains of the inquisition which he laid upon her with the help of Rome, was—to her eternal honor—the first country in old Europe to declare for religious liberty. It was in Holland that the Jewish Marranos, the victims of the Inquisition, were first able to call openly on the name of God in the midst of Christians—after this right had already been accorded them by the “godless” Turks.

In America it was Roger Williams, a Puritan preacher, who was the first to deny to the Church the right to punish men for the crime of refusing to subscribe to the first table of the Ten Commandments—the commandment to serve the one and only God—and for the crime of refusing to observe the official Sabbath. It was the same Roger Williams, too, who, founding a new state, proclaimed religious equality for all, “Jew and Turk and Buddhist,” and their full right to worship God in their own way.

The tragedy and the privilege of the Catholic Church was that upon her devolved the destiny of remolding the world in the Christian faith. To her fell the inheritance of the world of antiquity. But part of that inheritance was the heathen character and nature of man of antiquity. The Catholic Church made a valiant effort to

remake man in the image of the Christian ethic. But born into the prison house of an age, she carried out of it all the traces of the place of her birth. Her achievements are enormous. Upon her shoulders rested the responsibility of the world before God. Therefore her transgressions are the heavier: she has sinned much because she has loved much.

As to my own faith, God be thanked that the nations have not given my people the opportunity to commit against others the crimes which have been committed against it. I say, God be thanked, for if that opportunity had been given it, it would probably have conducted itself against strangers in the same manner as the other peoples; even though, remembering the attitude of the Jewish faith toward "strangers" and "God-fearing" gentiles, I simply cannot imagine it succumbing to the same frightful beastliness. But no doubt in the same way a genuine Christian believer too, remembering the high ethical concepts of the Christian faith, cannot imagine that his Church lit the fires of the Inquisition. The undeniable fact remains, however, that, within the narrow limits of their power, the Jewish Rabbis did not fail to make use of repressive measures; they issued excommunications, they condemned sinners against the faith to the lash, or to lie in chains at the entrance of the synagogue; they persecuted unbelievers and burned the "unclean" books found among Jews. In Amsterdam the Marranos who had fled from Spain invoked some of the methods of the Inquisition against those noble spirits Uriel Acosta and Baruch Spinoza. It is not impossible, I repeat, that if the Jewish faith had

been tempted by opportunity, it would have wrung from the words of Moses and the Prophets and the Mishnah the right or the duty to do unto others as others had done unto them. If the Inquisition could find such warrant in the New Testament, the Jewish faith could have found it in the Old.

But, when all is said and done, it was *not* my faith which applied the tinder to the faggots about the stake; it was not my faith which erected the Inquisitorial courts, haled before them innocent people, and condemned them to the most fantastic tortures in the hope of squeezing out of them "confession" and "acceptance." It was not the Rabbis who forced priests to debate with them in the attentive presence of the Inquisition. It was not my faith, or my people, which descended on others with fire and sword, compelling them to abandon the ways of their fathers, reject and condemn their ancient sanctities, and adopt modes of worship alien to their religious nature. And therefore I thank and praise God that my faith had not the opportunity to visit upon other faiths the crimes which the other faiths visited upon her.

Downright stupefying in this connection is the unanimity with which the tormentors of innocent people have called on the name of the God of Israel and of the authority which He transmitted through His chosen ones. Satan has made larger use of the Bible to do evil than priests and Rabbis to do good, and his acquaintance with texts surpasses that of all Bible critics. From the first days of religious persecution, the "exclusively faithful"—whoever they happened to be—found warrant

for their abominable deeds in chapter and verse. They cited the instance of Elijah who slew the prophets of Baal; of Saul, who forfeited his throne by showing compassion toward the women and children of Amalek; of Jesus who whipped the moneychangers from the Temple. The Inquisition made the Bible its justification for every auto-da-fé, and Calvin evoked it as readily to justify the burning of that noble spirit, Miguel Servetus, at the stake.

How did this fantastic perversion come about? What fundamental causes lie behind this degradation of God's word, which has transformed it into the sword of Satan? And what touchstone shall we apply to discover when the authority of God is being used for the fulfillment of his will, and when it is being abused for the thwarting of it?

I can see only one consistent test applicable in all ages and to all situations: whenever the legitimate guardians of the authority forsook the Jewish-Christian spirit and drew near to the heathen spirit, they forsook also the way of justice and goodness.

Before we apply the test, let us reach common ground on the matter of the "Jewish-Christian" and the "heathen" spirit. (I say "Jewish" rather than "Hebraic" because by the time of the Second Temple there was no longer a Hebraic spirit—only a Jewish one.) The definition has been supplied by none other than the Apostle Paul, who, with characteristic penetration, says the following concerning the Greeks: "They served the creature more than the creator."

Philo expressed himself similarly with regard to the Stoics.

Heathendom, or the heathen spirit, is wingless. It cannot lift itself to heights from which the totality of being is visible, and it therefore loses itself in details. It lacks fantasy for that which it cannot apprehend with the senses; it must hold the thing in its hand. For this reason it sees beauty as one god, strength as a second, harmony, power, and even sorrow, as separate and distinct gods. That is to say, it apprehends only the created, and that it serves and aspires toward. In the Jewish spirit of the Second Temple, these attributes are aspects of the totality which created them. Therefore the Jewish spirit does not dwell on the details. It sees the one which contains all things—those which can be grasped by the senses and those which can not be so grasped.

When we apply to the record of human events this measure which Paul has given us, we soon discover where the error began. We perceive that the relapse of the guardians of God's authority into the heathen spirit was mainly responsible for the zig-zags and detours of history. The sins of spiritual leaders are a direct function of their substitution of the creature for the creator in their worship and adoration.

We may, indeed, apply this yardstick, with equally instructive effects, in other fields of human activity—as we shall see a little further on. It may certainly be applied in the field of government and of religious administration. The Pope of the Middle Ages did not see the creator; he saw the creature and glorified it. The ambition of the Holy Father in Renaissance times was not to

bring down to earth the Kingdom of Heaven, but to bring another little earthly kingdom under his sway. His model was not the fisher-Jew of K'far Nahum, who had achieved a vision of the totality; it was, instead, the King of Spain, or the King of France. Them he envied and their little conquests he imitated. The Church was fruitful only when it derived its inspiration from the Jewish-Christian spirit. When it worshiped and glorified the creator it brought forth great humanitarian, pious, and learned institutions—monasteries and communities. When it forsook that spirit and turned to heathenism, the best it could do was to renew the Greek concepts of art and beauty in the Renaissance, while at worst it lit the fires of persecution and waged religious wars on behalf of Satan.

And all faiths lost themselves in detail. Instead of adoring the creator, they adored petrified forms from which the living essence of the faith had withdrawn. For this essence cannot dwell in detached details; it can only suffuse them by being present in the totality, which is our father in heaven.

But the greatness of the authority is that it gives that enduring, universal goodness according to which a faith can be measured. Not the high priest of this or that sect determines what is good and what is evil; good and evil are fixed in the deeds of a faith. According to the good or evil deeds which a faith produces shall it be judged. And the measure is not applied by the faith itself, but by God, according to the authority which he has transferred to his messengers and according to the will which he has expressed through his prophets: "I delight not in

the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. . . . Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." (Isaiah 1:11-17.) "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26.) And though Asmodeus put on the robe of a priest or the *tallith* of a Rabbi, though he hold aloft the crucifix or the Torah, and though the name of God—from the New or the Old Testament—be loud on his lips, by his deeds alone shall we know him; and knowing him, we shall lift up the robe or the *tallith* and uncover the cloven hoof.

"Where is the bill of your mother's divorce, whom I have put away?" asks God. (Isaiah 1:1.) Whom has God excluded from his inheritance in Israel, and in whose face has he shut the gates of salvation?

"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, and hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath he lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath he defiled his neighbor's wife . . . hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment . . . he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God." (Ezekiel 18:4-9.)

Whom has God not taken into the tabernacle of peace which is the Messiah's, and whom has he expelled from salvation? Has not the Prophet said: "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples"? (Isaiah 2:4.) Will not the nations hasten

to the holy hill? And who that calls on the name of the God of Israel, and accepts his teaching and stands under his authority, has not his portion in the inheritance of Israel? "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." (Ephesians 2:14.) Therefore all those who adore the creator and worship him are our brothers, standing with us under the authority; and those who adore the creature and worship it are alien to us, for they stand under the authority of Asmodeus, that is, the spirit of heathendom. Let him be of my faith or of another: if he worship God he is my brother, if he worship the creature he is a stranger to me.

It is my deepest conviction, in accordance with the foregoing, that all wars and persecutions, all inquisitions and excommunications to which any of the prophetic faiths (all others are of an alien world and I have no attitude toward them) have ever resorted or still resort, for the sake of this or that detail of the faith, that all exclusions of believers in God from the salvation of God and his Messiah, for the sake of this or that deviation from dogma, have been and are directed not toward the service of God, but against it. And no exceptions can be made, whether claimed by the crucifix or the Torah or the Lutheran Bible.

Assuredly religions, like states, are governed not only by fixed laws and commandments but also by traditions and customs which have been created by special conditions existing at certain times. Such conditions called for adaptations and improvements so that the faith might be maintained and developed. But such adaptations, im-

provements, traditions, and customs are not cardinal laws issuing from the nature of the faith itself. They are measures taken in the face of political or other situations, and they can be abrogated by the present interpreters of the faith for the identical reason which led to their institution, that is, when the original situation has vanished and the traditions and customs no longer serve their original purpose, which was to strengthen the faith, but serve instead to frustrate and degrade it.

Understanding between varieties of religion—and therefore understanding between men—can be achieved only when we perceive and confess that just as man is dependent on the laws of his nature for his physical being, so he is bound by the law of his spiritual nature in his religious life. In other words, as there is an ineluctable physical nature, so there is a spiritual nature which man cannot flout. It is by no means God's desire that all men shall serve Him in one way, using one form of worship; He desires rather that every man shall serve Him according to the religious nature proper to him. Every compulsion placed upon a man to do violence to his religious nature, and to have him worship God in a manner contrary to that nature, is a crime against God himself. Just as it is contrary to our Jewish monotheistic nature, formed into what it is by the inheritance and education of centuries, to adapt our concepts to the idea of a physical son of God, so it is impossible for our Christian brothers, with their spiritual senses formed by their particular inheritance and education, to conceive that a man *must* be circumcized in the flesh in order to be of the seed of Abraham. To them it seems

natural that a man may be circumcized in the heart, belong to God—and partake of unclean meat. "That which God hath purified, call not thou common." But the divinity has too often been trapped in a net of laws which usurp territories not meant for them. Only when we will make truth the foundation of faith shall we reach an understanding. As the dogmas of my faith have laid for me a road to God, so the dogmas of my brother's faith have laid for him the selfsame road to the one and only God. And actually both roads are identical in spite of crossings and divergences, for they come together finally in the common goal—our living father in heaven.

The definition Paul has given of the Greek spirit can be used to measure all moral values, wherever they occur, in art, in science, and in the laws of a state. Every art, whatever its medium, word, line, color, or tone, is barren and heathenish if it glorifies the creature rather than the creator, even though every word, line, color, or tone is steeped in the harmonic perfection of the Greeks. Only that art is eternal which is informed with the awe of God and is directed to him via the creature. The modeled body of Rembrandt's Bathsheba, the Diana of the Leningrad Hermitage, are instinct with eternally moving beauty; in the Pietà of Michelangelo speaks the tragic clinging of man to the divinity, our plea for help in our degradation, the hope of salvation for our souls. For God stands behind these works, and they address themselves to him, not to his creatures.

Personality without faith is like a body which has been withdrawn from its magnetic field and must fall.

In the end our fount would run dry—and for good. Worse still, the radiations of our personality would not focus upon one point for our good; the radiation of each separate personality would choose its own direction and be lost in the loneliness which surrounds every individual. And worst of all: the personality would not serve humanity, but would apply its power, its richness, its knowledge, and its progress to destructive ends; it would poison the fount in order to infect mankind with cholera, as criminal scientists and artists have actually done when their hearts were empty of God.

The scientist in his role as specialist is completely indifferent to the uses to which his discovery is put; it is all one to him whether his gas or bacilli are used against mice or against men; what matters to him, qua specialist, is that the formula shall be correct and the effect as forecast; and in this he is quite like the philosopher who, having no ethical foundation, is indifferent to the outcome of his system, and whether it leads to God or to the devil.

And as to my own profession, let me say this: with all my respect for Greek literature, which gave us forms still governing our expression, I believe that we have sinned most grievously toward ourselves, and toward the love of truth, in having neglected the Bible in our schools, preferring to it the classics of the Greeks. I cannot help feeling that in Job, and in the New Testament descriptions of the Passion, there is at least as much tragedy, as profound a struggle round human destiny, as bitter a claim on behalf of suffering man, as in Sophocles; in Genesis, in the later Prophets, and

in the New Testament there is as much of the heroic, as much of man's fate, as in the Iliad or the Odyssey. No lyric has struck a higher note than the Song of Songs. And surely there is a more compulsive cry for truth and justice in an Isaiah or St. James than in all the writings of the subtle jurist, Cicero, who is so assiduously studied in our schools. And where shall we find anything to equal the pathos of a Jeremiah or the simple, human surrender of the Psalms?

And it is not only in its content, in its adoration of the creator, that the Bible towers high above all other peaks of the written word. It is as supreme in form as in content. The conciseness and exactitude of expression, the color and resonance of the words, are the fruit of a masterly discipline. Were we to introduce our youth to that discipline (not just through Sunday readings of the Bible, but through its introduction as a "classic" into our high schools and colleges) we should be bringing up not only a better and more God-fearing generation, but a richer and more beautiful one.

Chapter Twelve

THE ATHEISTIC PERIOD

The history of the new age begins for me on January 7th, 1610. On that day Galileo established, through his little telescope, the existence of the satellites of Jupiter, affording confirmation of the long-formulated Copernican hypothesis that our world is not the center of the universe but only a small, pitiful planet revolving about the sun.

When the gods are overthrown in heaven, the mighty tremble on earth. It is my view that our new civilization, and all the progress of science and of our social and cultural life during recent centuries, have their origin not, as German historians contend, in the democratization of religion by Luther, and not, as others would have it, in the Dutch and British victory over Philip II, but in Galileo's discovery of the satellites of Jupiter and the phases of Venus.

This event I would designate as the beginning of the atheistic period. The epoch which opens with the date mentioned stretches through the Encyclopaedist, through Voltaire and Rousseau and the French Revolution, up to the birth of the evolutionary theory, of Haeckel's monism and of the materialistic interpretation of history; it reached its highest point in the

“herring-collectivism” to which it reduced mankind by invoking again upon it the curse of being nothing but species. Galileo’s discovery deprived the earth of its primacy of position; it was no longer the center for and about which God had created the universe; it was compelled to give up the place which the Greek Ptolemy had assigned to it with his complicated system of cycles and epicycles. This order of the solar system had been sustained by Aristotle’s overwhelming authority; it had been buttressed by all the religious thinkers and legislators; by devious ways it had been brought, via the Jewish thinker Maimonides, the scholars of the Arab world, and finally Thomas Aquinas, into the Catholic Church; and it had become a piece of religious property guarded by the sword of the Inquisition. And suddenly the earth had ceased to be the crown of creation, the other celestial bodies were suddenly perceived to exist for some other purpose than to mark the hours of happiness of the mighty of this earth. In reality this earth of ours was but a wretched planet sustained by the sun; and the sun which until then had flamed in the heavens only for the glory of the King of Spain, was one of the smallest among millions of fixed stars. If this indeed be so, there is no ground any more for human arrogance, for we are all equals, all tiny worms on an insignificant planet.

This was the beginning of the democratic movement, this was the spring at which it fed. This was what gave to the human way of thought a turn in the direction of realism, of factuality. It was much as in Shakespeare’s *Tempest*. The King of Naples is on the sinking ship,

and, together with sailors and servants, is threatened with death. To them the boatswain calls: "If you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more; use your authority: if you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour."

When the ship sinks, King and servants alike are transformed into mice.

It was not for nothing that the Church, like all the mighty of the earth, clung so desperately to the Ptolemaic system. Galileo had come honestly by the enmity of the Inquisition.

The Church seemed to have reason for threatening, as she constantly did, that with the fall of the gods, i.e., with the removal of the centricity of the earth, men would sink into an animal condition. For there was no power to sustain man in his position of priority.

But man is obviously an animal which cannot live without faith and without bonds. And when he had lost his faith in faith, he created for himself a bond with "apostasy," with godlessness.

Curiously enough, in this atheistic period man came into a close bond with the authentic factor of faith. Everything which he created during the atheistic period (and this was nothing more nor less than that which we call modern civilization) is informed by a piety which springs from an inner faith—not a faith practiced in the hope of some return, but one which exists for its own sake, a faith whose like can be found only in an age of the highest religious ecstasy.

It was in his atheistic period that man brought into being new ethical and moral values which have lifted mankind to the highest level and have created a new inner pathos.

The scientists, social reformers, artists, and moralists of the atheistic period fulfilled their respective missions with a specifically religious enthusiasm and in a spirit of self-sacrifice rare in the annals of religion. This enthusiasm of creation derived its inspiration from new sources, which do not lie outside of this humanity, but are to be sought within it. It was as though tremendous accumulated stores of ethical energies lay in man. There ensued a sustained competition with nature, as though man was trying to comfort Mother Earth in her poverty: as though he addressed the earth, saying: "Keep up your courage; it is quite true that you are not the center of the universe, but we with our creative spirit will so enhance your reputation that you will take precedence over all the vast celestial bodies and become once more the center."

What wonder that a tormented humanity saw its salvation not in acceptance of the authority of God but in a breaking of all bonds with him, and in a rejection of the claims of those who spoke in his name? From the time of the humanists on, all our achievements in the liberation of thought, in science, political independence, and social justice—the sum total of the moral and material gains which make up our modern civilization—have been scored not with the help of the representatives of the authority, as was to be expected, but in revolt against them. Can it be denied that this war against the

“authority” was a holy one? The roster of its martyrs is as long, as rich in instances of idealism, fear of God, love of mankind, as is that of the faith itself. The historians of this “atheism” may point proudly to their gallery of saints, to their Brunos and Galileos, who risked or offered their lives for the freedom and happiness of mankind. The Church did not stand on the side of Holland in the struggle against the tyranny of the Inquisition and of Spain; her blessings were bestowed on the arms of the Emperor and not on those of the valiant burghers of the Low Countries. Faith inspired the latter; the former were encouraged by the Church. In the struggle for the freedom of thought which made possible the advance of science, in the championing of the cause of the poor, according to the central doctrine of the faith of God in both Testaments, the Church was on the wrong side until the last moment. In the struggle of the unhappy Spanish people to break the chains of slavery, the Church sided with the mighty and the wicked. The sins of the Church have been visited upon God, and among the masses of the poor the impression has been created that God is not on the side of the weak, the lowly, and the humble; he does not make the cause of the widow, the orphan, and the oppressed his own; he is on the side of the oppressor. So it has come about that all the credit for love of man, of justice and freedom, the holiest possession of faith, has been presented to the godless, a kind of carte blanche which they used until they became bankrupt in Bolshevism, Fascism, and Nazism.

Now we all know that the seeming marriage of athe-

ism with humanitarianism was only a temporary liaison, a passing affair. It was a device to win the recognition and loyalty of the oppressed and the wretched of the earth. Once this object had been achieved, the union was repudiated; atheism took possession of the house and expelled humanitarianism.

Nor was it easy to reproach atheism with treachery. Had atheism ever undertaken to serve a God? Had it accepted any form of authority which would compel it to do this, or refrain from doing that? Atheism was its own god; good and evil were measured by its standards; whatever it called justice was justice, whatever it condemned as evil was evil.

Can this be taken as an attack on humanism? I cannot fell the tree of humanism, lest I destroy the branch to which I cling, the justice which was brought forth by humanism. It is very far indeed from my mind to anoint the old chains of physical and spiritual slavery with the oil of faith, so that they may be slipped on our limbs again. How would it be with me, today, if not for the work of the humanists? How would it be with all of us Jews if not for the emancipation of the liberal movement? Where would we be if not for liberators like Reuchlin, Rousseau, and even Voltaire? It was they who fought on the side of God when the Church was arrayed against him. They picked up the essential good in faith, the liberation of man, when the Church contemptuously rejected it.

But is it not obvious that with all their seeming opposition to God and the authority, the humanists—however little they may have understood this at the time—were

nourished by the highest moral good which the faith had brought forth, namely, the love of one's fellow men? It was not the intelligence which inspired the idealism of the fighters and martyrs on the humanistic side; it was that deep-rooted passion for justice which faith had planted in man as a second nature. What the humanists failed to realize was that their quarrel was not with the Church to whatever extent that body had still retained the inspiration of the Prophets. From the beginning they placed man on a level which made him the center of human events, so that he found again, in his high election, his mystic bond with the divinity. This apotheosis and election was later to stick in the throats of the rationalists, who saw humanity as an aggregation of maggots; the mystic value of man was denied in the slogan of "bread and work" which was the sum total of the vision of Marxism.

Yet side by side with this outburst of creative passion informed by inner faith, there was to be observed in man a suicidal impulse, a fury directed against himself. One noted on the faces of certain scholars of the monistic period a murderous kind of grinning, evoked when they succeeded in proving that man was not a separate creation but merely a highly developed animal.

They used every possible and impossible device to fasten man down to his animal condition; and every attempt to raise man above that condition, and to accord him a place above the animals, was regarded very definitely as a betrayal of the high principles of equality and fraternity; it was also denounced as a manifestation of backwardness and of a theological world-

outlook, as an adulteration of the purity of science for the benefit of clericalism and the Church.

This materialistic view eventuated in the condition to which man has been reduced wherever the view has triumphed and become a reality: the herring-collectivism of Bolshevism and the mass enslavement of Nazism. In both instances the magic name of a god of social liberation is invoked for the suppression of all personal value and the destruction of that individual creative power to which, and to which alone, we can credit all our progress. Methods of the utmost cruelty and savagery were applied to the end that the human species might be violently torn away from whatever represented growth and progress and flung back into the condition which characterizes the animal world.

Even more powerful than these external methods, contrived by physical force, was the eternal reiteration of the suggestion that the goal of our liberation is to be sought in the dissolution of our personality; as though, in a literal sense, our social needs could be met only after we had sloughed off our human skins and covered ourselves with the hides of beasts.

The condition to which the materialistic world outlook has reduced man—that is, the herring-collectivism of Bolshevism and the mass slavery of Fascism—marks, I believe, the close of the atheistic period. Vengeance against God wound up in vengeance against man, in the obliteration of his personality. Today the men who are responsible for the unhappy results of the storm of the atheistic period see that a humanity which has lost its only privilege, that of personality, can become

only that which the species is by nature: a herring-collective.

The lash may force men to physical labor; it cannot force them to spiritual creativity. If the protagonists of materialism want to become creative, they must take up again what they have so contemptuously rejected—the individual personality. I would call the personality of man the gland of creativity.

The human personality and its creative emanation have conferred upon man the significance of a participant in creation. Thus everyone is made to assume responsibility, as if the fate of the world rested on his shoulders. And everyone begins to feel this co-responsibility: it depends upon my personality, upon my creative radiation, whether we rise or fall, whether we continue along the path which leads to fulfillment and highest perfection, or whether we fall back into the abyss of fatalistic, impotent bondage to destiny, from which there is no more rising and liberation. And the stronger the personality, the more glorious the creative radiation, the greater also the responsibility, the more intimate the partnership with everything that exists.

The personality is the root which sucks up spiritual goods through the creative intuition—and it is through the personality that the species is lifted to a higher level. The personalities are the hands which reach up to heaven, to bring down for us new, divine values. The union of personalities is not compulsory, is not forced upon them by blind destiny. This union, or rather this self-surrender of the individual to the many, is volun-

tary; it has been called forth by the highest that man has achieved—by the grace of faith.

There was nothing heretical about humanism. Its atheism was a weapon, not a faith. At heart it began with the God-feeling; hence its fruitfulness. But the same thing came to pass with humanism as with other moral forces which tamper with the source of moral understanding. The weapon or instrument became the end in itself. The difference between the humanism of the first period and the materialism to which it was later assimilated is the same as that between a Venus of Praxiteles and a Venus of the Asiatic-Hellenistic period of the second and third century. In the lines of the early Venus there is divine harmony, mystic beauty, and religious enthusiasm; in those of the decadent Venus there is gross fleshliness, devoid of all mystic suggestion. The Venus of Praxiteles is a goddess, created for religious ends because born of religious emotion, and therefore her body is instinct with piety and graciousness; the Venus of the late Hellenistic period is a harlot, never created for religious ends, because not born of religious emotion. It sprang, instead, from wild, untamed Asiatic passion. Humanism, when it loses its belief in the mystic primacy of man, changes from a blessing to a curse. The bidding, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," has true value only when it springs from and is linked to the bidding "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and acquires endurance and significance only from this linkage. Where the original fount of moral understanding is ignored, the inspiration departs from the purely human system. When humanism became an end in itself,

thinking it could supply its own waters, it condemned itself to sterility.

We may, changing the simile, put it thus: a justice which is based solely on human intelligence is subject to all the changes of the intelligence and can be applied to any end which the intelligence chooses. The intelligence has many justices, as it has many truths. But the justice which is based on the divinity is one and eternal. It can suffer no change because the truth of divinity is one and eternal. It is true that men may turn from this truth too and still claim to accept it. But in this case—and in this case alone—there is an eternal standard to which we can appeal from their deviation. No such recourse remains to us when we have accepted the intelligence alone, and we look in vain for the everlasting principle which makes it a sin to destroy “the enemies of the revolution,” or subscribe to the theory of “racial purity,” or worship according to the black rites of communism, Fascism, Nazism, and their like.

On such justice we can place no reliance, and for its “generosities” no gratitude is due.

Chapter Thirteen

FREEDOM ON FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

It is my belief that there is one figure in American history which has never been justly dealt with—that the influence of Roger Williams on the mentality of America, and particularly on the attitude of the Founding Fathers with regard to religious tolerance, has been consistently underestimated. Undoubtedly the combative spirit of the man and the bitterness of his struggle against the aristocratic Bostonian theocracy, has done much to obscure his personality. We are prone to forget that there were two Roger Williamses. One was the Roger Williams who fought on and on until he fled to the wilderness; the other was the Roger Williams who crossed over and founded Rhode Island. It is true that the first Roger Williams carried on a war to disassociate religion from the state and lifted up his voice against the punishment of any man for breaking the first table of the Ten Commandments, not in the name of Voltairian ideas, but in the name of that freedom of the soul which is part of faith. He derived his strength not from the humanists but from the Prophets. For all that, the story of the bitter fight with the Plymouth theocracy, and the emphasis on his antagonism to his homeland, have

hidden the man from our view. It is only later, when he had made religious freedom the foundation of the new state, that his personality rises above the dust of controversy. His insistence on buying the land from the Indians, and on repudiating the right of the monarchy to it, was not born of revolutionary, anti-monarchical convictions; it came from a religious impulse associated with the concept of justice as it issues from faith. The Mayflower settlers, too, made a covenant of equality of rights among themselves—but only among themselves, and for their own kind. Roger Williams extended freedom of worship to “Jew, Buddhist and Turk”—and solely in the name of faith in the divinity. Thus his tolerance is touched with the values which we find in the declarations of religious freedom issued by the Prophets, and it became the cornerstone of American liberty.

There is no doubt, of course, that the authors of the Declaration of Independence were strongly influenced by the European humanists and fighters for liberty and in particular by English jurists and writers on law. It is well to remember, too, that in their veins flowed the same blood as in the veins of the European revolutionaries who responded so vigorously to the appeal of the Encyclopaedists. Yet they themselves did not know—or perhaps they had more than a suspicion of it—to what extent they stood under the influence of Roger Williams's declaration of freedom in the name of faith. For the Declaration of Independence, the tablets of America's form of government, was not issued in the name of a King or Parliament, and not in the name of

a Congress or of this or that hero of the Revolution. It was issued in the name of God, who had made all men equal, so "that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. . . ."

Thus, for the first time in human history, a state declaration bases the equality of the rights of men not on the fact that they belong to one nation, or to one faith, but on the fact that they have been created equal by the creator of all. For my rights as a human being, then, I am beholden to no creature, no man; nor am I beholden either to the justice which flows from intelligence, or to the goodwill of a revolutionary group. My thanks are due to one only—the creator; therefore no instrument can deprive me of these rights without committing the crime of crimes against the creator.

Hence I believe that the Declaration of Independence of our Founding Fathers should be entered as an article of faith among the dogmas of all the faiths of all Americans. It should be taught not only in our schools but also in the churches and synagogues, in the catechisms and in the religious primers; and it should be entered as one of the prayers in the Jewish *siddur*. For the freedom which is spoken of in the Declaration of Independence carries all the attributes of faith.

Contrast with it, once more, the freedom which I and others acquired through the French Revolution, a transient as compared with an eternal good. It finds its justification in the Revolution which gave it to me, an act of grace dependent on its victory. A counter-revolution may deprive me of that freedom because I am not part of it. And even the revolution may always look

upon me with suspicion as being unworthy of its confidence and generosity. The moment it discovers, or thinks it discovers, that I am not the servant of the revolution, and that I do not accept as divine law every one of its acts and enactments, from the noblest to the basest, it can place me outside the scope of its liberation—as happened under our own eyes with the “liberties” which the Russian Revolution bestowed upon us. The liberties which are based on revolution are narrow and partial, and someone is always excluded from their application.

But the liberties which are not acquired and bestowed by, and inherent in, a revolution, but which are an organic part of me, residing in my nature, and for which, therefore, I have none to thank but my creator, only these liberties, as perceived by the Anglo-Saxon mentality, are a true and an eternal good. The English person does not feel himself beholden for his freedom to a revolution, or even to a first parliament which has long since gone out of his mind. His freedom carries with it no obligation to a liberator. His freedom is of himself; it is himself. And this outlook was inherited by America on the day of her birth. In taking over, America gave additional emphasis and clarity to the source of freedom by referring it specifically, in her first great utterance, to the original source, which is God. For this reason the Declaration of Independence is not a copy or transcription of an English declaration or enactment, as many jurists would have us believe. For the truth is that there were several formulations of the reasons for our severance from England and the assertion of our freedom, and they were indeed based on English enact-

ments. They were rejected. The one that was accepted was the one that carried the original stamp of America, the overt recognition of the source and "author of liberty"—our father in heaven. In spite, then, of the traces of English ideas and enactments, the Declaration of Independence is in its essence profoundly and specifically American, unique among the state documents of mankind.

Only such freedom as rests on the creator and not on the creature has in it the mystic religious powers which brought forth the Prophets. Only such freedom, a radiation of the divinity, was capable of giving to the modern world a new Amos in the figure of Abraham Lincoln.

Chapter Fourteen

THE DOMINION OF THE DEMONIC

It came about then that, the legitimate guardians of the authority having declined from the spirit and having given themselves over to internecine war for the sake of ritual and dogma, other forces which had never possessed the authority took up, in their own way, the battle for the brotherhood of man, the central thesis of faith. These other forces, devoid of the authority from the outset, defined human brotherhood and social justice in terms of narrow party principle, excluding from their benefits all human beings who did not answer to their formula. With the fury which is characteristic of Satan they spread hate and envy between nation and nation, class and class, man and man, leaving an open wound in the body of mankind and pouring a toxin into our most primitive sense of justice.

It is not Judaism and Christianity which represent two separate authorities; they stand under a single authority issued in separate forms. They are founded on the same principle and derive from one source, which is God. It is the faith of the demonic which represents a separate authority. Nor does the demonism of our time content itself with the more or less negative role which characterized demonism in the past—a refusal to be-

lieve in God. It has become an affirmation and struggles with the divinity for the possession of the soul of man. This is not insubordination or withdrawal; it is the demand for absolute dominion. Samael claims that *he* is God. He creates his own Torah; he lays down in detail what is virtue and what transgression; he proclaims his absolute standard of values; he extends his rule beyond our pitiful mortality to our immortality; he is the principle and the imperative; whatever stands outside of him does not exist, or must be made not to exist.

Never before since the time when the moral form of our civilization was affirmed in the name of a divine will, has Samael, the denial of divinity, achieved such dominion in the world. Nor has this happened in the fantasy of a few religious mystics; it is realized in the flesh and blood of humanity, it regulates our actions, governs our ideas, penetrates into the inmost recesses of our hearts, obliterates the marks of our human inheritance and turns us back into the swarming, pullulating worm-heap which is the manipulative material of the demonic. Fantasies which haunted the minds of obsessed dreamers of the Middle Ages, like Busch and others, have become tangibilities. Anti-Christ is here! It is the time of the agonies of the Messiah, foretold in the convulsive visions of the Prophets and the Apocrypha. "God's lore will be wiped out from the heart of man." Samael will become sole lord and ruler; the heavens will rain down stones and blazing arrows; the fields will bring forth abominable beasts, such as the human eye has not yet beheld; the sea will spit forth dreadful creatures which the imagination cannot conceive; there will

be no hiding place, but the hills will fall on the heads of men and the valleys will cast them up; the earth will split and will fall into eternal darkness.

When we pass in review the murder, degradation, torture, and destruction—moral and physical—which the totalitarian powers have visited on the earth, when we contemplate the utter fragmentation of the foundations of civilization, the dissolution of the boundaries between good and evil, we are driven to the conclusion that more evil has been wrought in these last twenty years, more pain inflicted, by the new atheism than in all the long darkness of the Middle Ages, with their persecutions, their religious wars, and their defection from the spirit of the authority.

The greatest single evil which Samael has wrought goes beyond the destruction of physical and material values; for he has taken away from those who are in his dominion the ray of hope which proclaimed the coming of a brighter morning. The supreme tragedy of the intellectuals of our day is—that they have no God to believe in. Bolshevism has made impossible for them any faith in the solution of man's most intimate and bloodiest problems by way of a rational approach. After the Russian Revolution *no* revolution, adorned with all the old charms—humanity, fraternity, equality—will ever again attract the suffering masses. The special tragedy of this war does not lie in its cruelties and dictatorships—all wars are inhuman—but that peace in and for itself holds out no hope! Men dread peace now as they dread the war itself, lest it be a peace which does nothing whatsoever to heal the sicknesses of our social

order or to guarantee that war shall in the future be both impossible and unnecessary. For see what a "peace" closed the first world war!

For the period preceding the coming of the Messiah, Jewish mysticism has coined the phrase, "the Twilight." In that half-darkness concepts will fuse, mingle, and lose their identity; and there will be no measure of good and evil. The boundaries of justice and oppression will melt away. And this will be true not only of the flesh and blood reality of our behavior, but in the world of pure concept, which will fall back into the *tohu ubohu*—the formlessness and emptiness of old, save that above it will brood, instead of the spirit of God, the spirit of Satan.

In that time a small group will be left, the "remnant of Israel," which will remember the boundaries and which will see before it the pillar of fire which went before the Israelites in the wilderness.

I believe that the time of "the Twilight," of the wars of Gog and Magog, is here. In the dim confusion which has seized upon the world men wander about, their faces wild. They know neither what has happened to them nor what they would desire to have happen. I know old revolutionaries who have given their lives to the great struggle for human liberty. Their personal conduct could still serve as a universal example of human devotion and self-sacrifice. Today they stand paralyzed, unable to think of anything to desire. Therefore I say that in this twilight time we must delve deep into ourselves, discover the ultimate remnant of our feeling for God, and use it to guide us toward the pillar of fire.

And if we ask ourselves, why has all this come upon us, the answer is that we have brought it upon ourselves. Because we neglected and let fall the divine commandment of love for our fellow men, the opportunity was given to the demon to pick it up and to fashion with it a world in his own image. Ours is the fault if the demon was enabled thereby to present himself with the attributes of a god and become the *primum mobile* of our history, the "effective intelligence" of our moral and material being, the logos of our spirit, the controller of our destiny and the messiah of our future, demanding of us, as our first sacrifice to Moloch, the surrender of the personality of man.

The same process set in among other problems, such as national liberation and the equality of peoples. Here, somewhat more than in the matter of the love of our fellowmen, the priesthoods of the various faiths did take up the cause of their own peoples, and contributed something toward their liberation. But alas, this too they did, not in the name of divine justice, but from an impulse of national egotism which coincided with the interests of their own groups. In no instance did they rise to a level of universal justice, such as the Prophets moved on, or to a perception of the mutuality of rights between man and God, like Paul. There have been instances enough of priesthoods which have not been content to stand idly by when hatred rose between nations but have added fuel to the flames and touched off the wildest chauvinistic madness.

In such instances the forces which called forth enmity and passion between men had no balance because such

justice as they injected into their demands was entirely one-sided, instead of multi-sided, like the justice of God; or, rather, they made their own concept of justice. Removing themselves thus from the competence of the authority, they reaped the ultimate consequences of their self-elevation: they were turned over to the demons of Bolshevism and Nazism-Fascism.

For the latter, again, cannot confine themselves to dominion over their own peoples but must thirst for world dominion. They have appointed their apostles, whom they have sent to the nations, to spread their doctrine.

Everywhere the youth of this generation waited hungrily for an ideal, for a way of life. They had inherited from their parents a world disfigured by injustice and steeped in bitterness—the post-war world of seven fat years and seven lean years, of false prosperity and real decline, of moral disintegration in the midst of passing plenty—“Eat, drink, tomorrow you die.” When the crash came, bringing with it a condition of unemployment and want without parallel in human history, those that had escaped the deluge looked on indifferently. One half of the city went on eating and drinking, the other half hungered, slept under the open sky, wandered from one heartless place to another—ragged hordes of men, women, and children. We are still in the midst of the seven lean years. What wonder, then, that the youth laid hold of the life-line of Communism and Nazism, only to be drowned in the seas of their hatred? There began a new war within the family; brother was set against brother, father and son did not

know each other. There was no longer a common language for all men. That which was justice yesterday is evil today; the truth of today may be the falsehood of tomorrow. The foundations of our civilization have been undermined by a demonic ideology to which the youth turned in ultimate desperation.

What did we have to offer, what did we oppose to the demons, with their "authority" and their "kingdom?" We set out by ignoring them. Some of us considered it beneath our dignity to enter into competition with them. The wish was father to the thought that they would fail and disappear of themselves; some of us, prompted by a variety of personal, egotistic interests, even helped them. We deluded ourselves, against our own better knowledge, with the idea that we could overcome them with gentleness, and we handled them with the silk gloves of democracy. We spoke to them in friendly reproach, preached justice and humanity and the like at them. But what did we have to throw into the scales against them? With what swords did we go out to do battle against the dragons of Nazism and Bolshevism?

We had a weapon of sorts: the democratic principle, or rather the principle of an arterio-sclerotic liberalism without the power to obligate us to any action.

What did liberalism do, what could it do, in our time, to help bring salvation to a suffering world? Did liberalism have claws and teeth with which to defend itself against the savagery of a society blind to human pain? What confidence could it inspire in a youth which was the witness of the cruel indifference which one half of humanity displayed toward the sufferings of the other

half? Could such impotent humanitarianism, which entailed no obligation, fashion a defensive and offensive ideology for the use of the youth in the struggle against demonism?

The weapons in the hands of the French soldier were inferior to those of his enemy; and what was worse, the armory of his heart was utterly empty. Against him came out a people which had been trained in a desperate tradition of election—by Wotan. The new German man had been inspired with the furious belief that every act of savagery committed in the name of German rulership of the world was a high expression of human destiny. Side by side with this blind horde marched another in a similar tradition, which bore the aspect of a materialistic messiah. That tradition, too, came to fulfill “human destiny.” The watchword was the liberation of the hungry masses; the outcome was the creation of the slavery of liberty. Like German man, Bolshevik man drove blindly forward over a road of corpses; like German man he tore out of his “beneficiaries” the sense of individuality, transforming them into a squirming heap of maggots. Deaf and blind, the youth followed, its eyes fixed on an ultimate redemption. Criminal deceit, parricide, destruction of all moral values—these were the implements of the redemption.

On one side, then, stood the devil, armed to the teeth; on the other side there stood no God to bid him pause. The last restraints were down, the ultimate foulness from which man had shrunk in his worst moments, rose to the surface, uninhibited. A sea of fiery filth sweeps over the

nations, carrying everything before it. It has broken the walls of all sanctuaries, smashed all shelters, caught up millions in its waves. From millions of human throats the cry goes up to the demonic lord of the flood: "We will be thy slaves, only let us live!"

Chapter Fifteen . THE RELIGION OF MAN

Who, then, can fail to see, in that which has happened to us, the finger of God? Is not this the punishment which we have earned because we have left his path? The nature of sin is that it carries corruption with it. When you become indifferent to crimes committed against others, you have dug a pit for yourself. Hitler first tried the sword with which he now destroys nations on the throats of the Jews; now the nations pay, one by one, for the indifference—or was it worse than indifference; was there in it a touch of malicious delight?—which they displayed when Nazism acquired by practice on Jews that expertness in savagery which it now visits on all. This is not said in a spirit of recrimination, nor for the purpose of shifting responsibility. For all that I have written here is a confession, for myself and for others.

We have all sinned. We are all guilty in the calamity which has come upon us. We have all contributed to the elevation of the demon of evil to the throne of God. Have we Jews lived according to all the prescriptions thoughtfully provided by our wise men for every foreseeable and unforeseeable situation, or according to the ethical concepts of the Jewish faith? Were we the holy people,

the people of the election, which we were bidden to be, and which we persuade ourselves that we are? What shall I answer? We have commissioned our Rabbis to make a "settlement" for us with the accountant on high, while we ourselves pursued earthly well-being as the highest good. It may be, indeed, that we have been somewhat more generous than others in our philanthropies, simply because our peculiar position, our common suffering, has awakened in us a strong feeling of mutual responsibility as a means of self-preservation. But as against this we have been too noisy, lacking in reserve and modesty both in our acts and in our contacts with others. I take upon myself the right to say this to my people, because I am of it, and bear part of the guilt. I have no right to preach to others than Jews—if, indeed, to them!—but I have the right to address this question to the Christians: has Christian man, to whatever faith or division of faith he belongs, lived according to this faith? Has he suffered, surrendered, died, and been purified in the spirit of Jesus? Have the limbs of the Christian been the vessels of Christ? How can Christian man lift his hand to do evil if he believes that he is a part of the suffering Messiah and the Messiah is a part of him?

All of us must beat our breasts in confession. A great Day of Atonement must come over the world. Life must be remolded. Jew and Christian alike must turn back to the origins of faith. We must choose a path of which we can say with the utmost certainty that it is the good path, God's path, the only one to be followed. More than at any other time in our history we must be armed morally, so that every one of us may be conscious that

he is a defender of those moral goods without which life is not worth the living. Our house must be put in order, and the order must be a just one, so that every one of us is prepared to lay down his life for it.

Such a change within us, such conviction that we stand on the side of God, cannot be the result of ideals emanating solely from the intelligence. One ideal alone can save us, that which is coterminous with faith in God and which is the sum of ideals, excluding from its grace no member of the human race. There is no measure of justice other than the justice of God; for justice is truth, and there is one truth, and one truth only.

Faith must become something more than an insurance of our latter days. We must not resort to it only in the shadow of the terror of death. Our finest senses, our most delicate intuitions, must be put in the service of the rebuilding of faith, so that we may perceive what faith prepares in the world after our death. We must learn the joy of the community of faith, rejecting that concept of faith which makes it the private inheritance of those who were cunning enough to put themselves on the right side, while all others are expelled into the outer darkness. There must be a leveling of the barriers which separate faith from faith—for we are all children of one community. You and I, and everyone else who is beholden to our common source for the possession of moral values, must know that we belong to one family, one race; because the blood which flows in our veins is the blood of faith, everywhere the same, and everywhere fed by the same roots.

Man as creative being breathes creation. Every word

he utters leaves its stamp upon matter and imparts life to a form, a concept or an object. Every movement he makes evokes countermovement, change. But herein he does much more than enrich creation. In the acquisition of his personality man enriched not only himself but nature too. For he cannot do anything, he cannot perform a single act, which shall stand outside the bounds of nature. In this wise he has both burst and enriched her being from within. The nature of the animal world is animal, locked in destiny; the nature of man's world has through him become human, creative of nature, boundless.

Since the essence of man is doing, since his essence is forever radiating concrete forms, he cannot of course be content with abstractions on his way to God and in his bond with inspiration. He must under these aspects of himself have concrete forms, and therefore he has adorned the thread which links him to God with concrete symbols. These have always served him as guides and supports in his laborious ascent, and they still serve him as such. The origin from which he sprang—the world of animal species—draws him back unceasingly like a magnet; he sinks back and again strives forward in an eternal struggle against his fate. And even though the symbols which he has created for himself may have become completely petrified, even though he has utterly forgotten their first significance and come to accept them in the place of God, yet his daily pouring of the self into strict form has given him help and security in his struggle.

The thinking man who has liberated himself from the

magic with which time and man's own power of imagination have invested external symbols, the man who hungers for God, who seeks a support, and seeks likewise assimilation with God, cannot achieve these ends through abstract schemata. For man cannot reach God save through God's nature, through his concrete creation. The road to God must be a firm one; it must be made visible with indestructible and undeceptive signs, even like the road to life. Man must bring as offering to God the richest things in his possession—his daily breath, his service in creation. In order to acquire a firm and concrete bond with God, in order that he may not lose himself in the dissolving mist of the abstract, man must be able to exercise a daily check and control on his way to God; in other words, man must build himself a new ladder of concrete symbols and mount to God on its rungs. For only the concrete can give him the support which he needs in his struggle with his animal origin.

The new, free man can achieve his concrete contact with God—of this I am profoundly convinced—only through contact with God's part in our life, that is, through contact with man.

If man wants to have a clear picture of how he stands with God, he need only form an honest picture of how he stands with man. To give himself an accounting of what he has done to strengthen his bond with God, man must ask himself daily: "What have I done today for my fellow man?"

Man is the instrument through which God penetrates

into our life. That is why I would also like to designate man as the concrete part of God.

There can be no faith in God without faith in man. Only through the love of man can God be loved. For faith rests no less than love upon mutual interaction. In and for himself, without that part of him which believes in him, God is inconceivable. He becomes real only through the faith which the other reposes in him. Just as love only becomes a reality when the lover finds an object for his love, so God becomes something real only when man believes in him. Thus man is a part of the love of and faith in God. The love of God begins with the love of man; faith in God begins with faith in man.

All of us, all men, are bound together by our common faith in divinity, or, to put it better, by our common love of the object, our affective belonging to God. It is as though all our roots run back into a common growth in the divine being—and we draw our enthusiasm, our inspiration, from a single source.

The divine source from which we drink in common binds us in the common joy which radiates from it, that joy which accompanies every believer through his life, like its leitmotiv. It is the joy which confers the highest grace upon the individual, the consciousness of being bound up with the commonality. It is that joy which lifts the individual to the sacrifice for the many—not in order to take by storm an illusory place in human annals, but in daily, anonymous self-sacrifice for the good of others.

The contact with God has endowed us with a common feeling of interdependence and interbelonging. Through the contact with God a new dignity is born in

us. God binds us with one another. He concentrates all of our rays in one prism.

And I ask myself: why should not we, the "remnant of Israel," who "have not bowed the knee to Baal," unite in a single congregation of believers? Why should we indeed not accept the words of the prayer: "Let us become a single congregation to do thy will in the wholeness of our hearts?"

The equal rights of all faiths could find no recognition in old Europe, where countless wars and immemorial persecutions have separated group from group and blinded us to the perception that the varieties of faith were but variations of detail in the acceptance of the great whole. This recognition of equality in the God of our fathers can be achieved only here, in America. That should be America's mission.

CONCLUSION

1) It is my deepest belief that just as I have a share in the God of Israel through my faith in him, that I stand under his authority and am included in the promise of redemption, so my Christian brother has his equal share in the God of Israel, stands equally under the authority and is included equally in the promise of redemption. For he is a son of Israel equally with me. His faith has made him a son of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. My rights are his, and I have a share in his religious values as he has a share in mine.

Basing themselves on this concept of equality, the sons of every faith must justify themselves in works. Man's

ladder to God is a ladder of works. God must be the ultimate expression of our relationship to each other on earth.

2) It is my deepest belief that man has been chosen by God's grace from among all creatures. Apart from the intelligence, which nature has given to every creature, and which is included in nature and limited to the objective and conditioned, man—alone among creatures—possesses a soul which is a part of the endowment from above. Through his soul man stands in mystic contact with heaven. By means of his soul man can acquire intellectual and intuitive powers which are outside the competence of nature, derive from the highest inspiration of the divinity, and are not limited to the objective and conditioned. God guides every individual destiny through the inspiration of the soul. This soul-inspiration is given to each one, and not only to the elect, so that everyone may, in the exercise of his free will, reach to the higher reason which is the supreme level of the holy spirit.

Each one of us can follow in the footsteps of Amos, abandon the flocks, and become a Prophet in Israel. In keeping with Jewish doctrine I believe in the democracy of divine election; each one of us can become even a Moses.

3) Accepting this point of view, it is further my profoundest conviction that the democratic principle—in the social system not less than in faith—is God's especial gift to man and resides in the act of grace which God performed for man in choosing him among all creatures. The democratic principle is interwoven with faith

and cannot be separated from God. In having been chosen by God we became the children of God: "For sons are ye of the Lord God"—all of us, and not just a few individuals. Any other relationship as between us and God, or as between ourselves, would contradict the will of the divinity, and would be incompatible with all that has been given to the Jews by Moses and the Prophets, and all that has been given to the Christians by Jesus and the Apostles. The democratic principle is "all the law fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Galatians 5:14.) This is the foundation which, together with the love toward God, was given through Moses, the Prophets, the Pharisees, Jesus of Nazareth, and the Apostles.

"Love thy neighbor as thyself" does not mean that you must be mild in your dominion over him; it means that you shall not have any dominion over him. He is a son of liberty not less than you, and the relationship between you and him can be built only on a system which assumes the identity of your rights. This is the democratic principle.

And as the democratic principle is the will of God in relationship between man and man, it is equally his will in the relationship between man and God. "It is not in the heavens." The divine law was not given to the angels, but to us, who are of the earth. It lies before us like an open book. The measure is in our hand.

Hence I believe profoundly that there is no love of God without love of men. Service to mankind is in my view the higher service of the divinity. But service to mankind must not be seen in the throwing of crumbs

to the poor; as we are equal in our faith in God, so we must be equal in our faith in man. We must work out a world order which shall rest upon equal distribution of labor and rewards. "The right to happiness" must not remain an empty gesture in our Declaration of Independence; it must be incorporated in the administrative duties of the state. It must be interpreted in the material sense to which men are bound by their nature: in food and clothing and shelter, in the care of the aged, in our regard for widows, for the sick and the weak. All this must become a cardinal obligation for the state, in its administration. The inner security of our citizens must become the cornerstone of our independence and freedom; it must become a tacit obligation, like external security; not because we regard social injustice as the most potent instrument of the devil—though it is, indeed, exactly that—but because without that tacit obligation our professions of faith are as empty as dicers' oaths.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." (I Corinthians 13:1-3.)

4) It is further my profoundest belief that we must lead a life in faith; that is, we must become that which we undertook to be—a holy people. We can be a holy

people only in a pure, ethical life, a life ruled by laws and commandments. But no laws and commandments, though they have a thousand eyes, and though they seem to control all our acts, can purify and sanctify us if the heart of man does not sanctify his life. The heart of man is a filter for all his acts and thoughts. If the heart is sound, man knows that his highest joy is bound up not with dissoluteness and the free play of uncontrollable passion, but with purity, with modesty, and with restraint.

There is no level of corruption from which man cannot redeem himself, by the exercise of his free will. And whenever he makes an effort at such redemption, he can be certain of help from above. For God's act of creation was not single and unique; it is a continuity of relationship through the individual destiny.

I believe, therefore, that for every individual there is salvation, no matter how low he has sunk. "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" (Ezekiel 8:23.) The heart of man is bound with the divinity through the radiations of divinity. To the darkest and most horrible retreats to which men have withdrawn from the divinity, a ray of the divinity penetrates. And for this reason we must never despair of a man, much less of a group which is temporarily lost to the divinity. However deep a group has sunk, we must continue to pray for it, and to help it with our desires and sympathies. And no matter how deeply we feel that we have been wronged by such a

group, we must exert ourselves to purify our hearts from bitterness.

We were worms in our physical creation; we have become human in our hunger for the divinity. The drink of God, which was lifted to our lips by the authority, has enabled us to mount the ladder of Jacob which rises from earth to heaven. If we will endure, and continue the upward path, we will attain to the true salvation of a world which stands under the authority of God through a single, universal redeemer.

The renewal of faith in the divine force of our moral values, as our sole hope in the darkness of our night, is what I would wish to submit to a suffering humanity.

It is America, which has been saved from the worst terrors of the night, which has not been corrupted with the cynicism which has been the undoing of Europe; it is America, young and powerful, blossoming in the virginity of faith, which must become the leading spirit among the nations. It is America, the land which has taken me in, among so many other homeless ones, as a child of her own, which I would like to see as a "light to the gentiles," leading the world back out of the night into the authority of the one and only God.

